

THE  
PRACTICAL RULE  
OF  
Christian Piety:

CONTAINING

The Summ of the *whole Duty* of  
a true Disciple of Christ.

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Written Originally in Latin

By *Benedictus Aria Montanus,*  
*James AND Hamilton*

Translated into English

By *A. LOVEL, M. A.*

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THE  
PRACTICAL RULE  
OF  
Christian Piety:

CONTAINING

The Summary of the whole Duty of  
a true Child of God.

Written in English & Latin  
By George Burdett  
Translated into English  
By A. LOVELL, M. A.

LONDON, Printed for W. & A. G. B. R. S.  
Hobbs, Bookseller to his  
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~~Kingdoms, People and Cities, are  
set by the judgement and Power~~

~~of God the author of all~~

~~things; and that they happen~~

~~they are preordained and foretold by~~

~~Prophet and other Men, for the glo-~~

~~ry of divine Providence the a-~~

~~uthority of the Lord of Hosts~~

# THE Author's Preface TO THE Christian READER.

**T**HEY who from the  
Study of the Holy Scri-  
ptures, and of the na-  
ture of worldly things,  
learn and do confess that God takes  
care of sublimary affairs; do clear-  
ly perceive that the rough Tempest  
wherein most Christian People are at  
present tossed, is not the effect of the  
uncertain influences of the Stars,  
nor that it is raised by hidden and  
obscure causes. None of them doubt,  
but that the publick Calamities of

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King-

## The Preface

*Kingdoms, People and Cities, are sent by the Judgment and Providence of God the avenger of wickedness; and that before they happen, they are Prophesied and foretold by Pious and Chosen Men, for the glory of divine Justice, and the amendment of the lives of sinful Men; as it is written: Amos 3. Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Will a Lion roar in the Forrest when he hath no Prey? will a young Lion cry out of his Den, if he have taken nothing? Can a Bird fall in a snare upon the Earth, where no Gin is for him? Shall one take up a Snare from the Earth, and have taken nothing at all? Shall a Trumpet be blown in the City, and the People not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it? Surely the Lord God will*

to the Reader.

will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets. Now for what causes such Commotions are raised both in publick and private affairs, the same Prophet does declare: publish in the Palaces at Ashdod, and in the Palaces in the Land of Egypt, and say, assemble your selves upon the Mountains of Samaria: and behold the great tumults in the midst thereof, for they know not to do right, saith the Lord, who store up Violence and Robbery in their Palaces. Therefore thus saith the Lord, an adversary there shall be even round about the Land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy Palaces shall be spoiled.

To me, truly, the visible cause of the divine Judgment against us  
A 2 appears

## The Preface

appears to be our publick and common sins; whilst I see the greatest part of Christians rent into several Sects, not only seduced and led away by many errors, but also proud and puffed up in them; and others who live in the Communion of the Church, and profess the true Doctrine, neglecting the duties of the same, and almost wholly perverting it: and so, whilst I reflect upon the depraved minds of some, and the corrupt and dissolute lives of others, and the Dissentions, Factions, Oppositions, Enmities and perverse courses of both, I often think with my self upon this. The Lord looked down from Heaven, upon the Children of Men; to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doth good, no not one. Tho

to the Reader.

Tho I neither be a Prophet, nor the Son of a Prophet, yet I dare be bold to foretel greater Storms hanging over our heads, unless they be prevented: It is enough to me, to make me affirm this; that I see those crimes in the Earth, which God Almighty by infallible Oracles has threatned not to let go unpunished. For if the Lion roar, who will not be afraid? if the Lord hath spoken, who shall not prophesie? Therefore he may very lawfully predict future evils, who sees the manifest causes, from which, God Almighty, calling Heaven and Earth to witness, has foretold that difficult and sad times will arise. Isa. i. Now the causes which I observe, I think are obvious to all Men, to wit, Deut. 32. our contumacy and insolence, our hardened obstinacy in wicked courses,

## The Preface

*courses; and a kind of contending with God that punishes us; which the Prophet Isaiah takes notice of in the Jews. Isai. 1. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with Ointment.*

*And, would to God! that in this tossing and agitation of the World there were no other loss but of the wealth, dignities, splendour and honours of the age, which tho they be highly valued, yet it might justly be born with, nay and perhaps to be wished, seeing such heavy loads and burdens are many times hinder-*

to the Reader.

hinderance to the prosperity of our course: but, which is most sad and grievous, when the danger of the loss of one poor soul ought, in right, to be prevented by the throwing over-board of all the goods and Cargo of the Ship; yet in such doleful Ship-wrecks, innumerable numbers of souls are observed to perish, and be swallowed up in the deep; which is the greatest of all humane miseries. Now seeing it is the duty and office of the Masters and Pilots, to bestir themselves for the safety of the beaten Vessel; and that I observe many of those who are concerned, diligently labouring for that purpose; who I want both authority and skill to act amongst those who rule the Ship; yet as being of the number of those, who in common danger, ought not to be idle spectators but busie in lending a hand, or at least

## The Preface

least assistant with fervent prayers, I thought it my duty, according to the mean and low station that I stand in, in the Church of God, with all humility and modesty to propose what I have judged proper for remedying of the evils, whereof the causes are so obvious to be known; especially since we bend our care to the admonishing and helping of those, who when they are unable to understand higher and greater matters, are not, perhaps, frequently taught those things which are more useful, and necessary to be known of all Men in general; and which if they be ignorant of, they can never attain to salvation, nor to the knowledge of those Points which are reckoned more noble and sublime truths. Nor do we fear that these our endeavours will seem unreasonable or superfluous to those great



to the Reader.

great Men, who are more learned and skilful in the art of instructing and teaching the way of living; we are rather confident that the considerate will approve of our design, hoping that if we have given any hints that may serve for forwarding their duty, they will take it kindly and in good part. For in great Storms, the chief Masters and Pilots, receive sometimes good advice from the Passengers, when they are pleased to hear them. In how much then, we have learned from the Doctrine and Word of God, for the obtaining of God the salvation of our souls in the next World, and publick Peace and Tranquillity in this, we conceive two things are to be done, the one is, that we persevere in the pure and holy Faith of the Catholick Church; and the other that we endeavour the amendment

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## The Preface

ment of our lives and manners, according to the Rules and Precepts of our Lord and Master, constantly praying against sin that endangers our souls, and for eternal life, which is their happiness and bliss. If these things be purely, religiously and holily set about, they will procure us the grace and mercy of God through Jesus Christ; as the Holy Ghost by the mouth of his Prophet does assure us: *Psal. 107.* Oh that Men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the Children of Men. They that go down to the Sea in Ships, that do business in great waters: These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy Wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up

to the Reader.

to the Heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken Man, and are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the Storm a Calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that Men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the Children of Men. Let them exalt him also in the Congregation of the People, and praise him in the Assembly of the Elders.

*Who so*

## The Preface, &c.

Who is wise, and will observe  
these things, even they shall under-  
stand the loving kindness of the  
Lord.

A drunken Man, and are as their  
wits end. Then they cry unto  
the Lord in their trouble, and  
he bringeth them out of their  
distresses. He maketh the storm  
a Calm, so that the waves thereof

are still. Then are they glad  
because they be quiet; so he  
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THE  
Practical Rule  
OF  
Christian PIETY.

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*The First Part.*

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**T**HE scope and design  
of all Philosophers,  
who have treated of  
the Nature and Acti-  
ons of Man, and have given pre-  
cepts and rules for the conduct  
of humane life, seems to have  
been to find out and demonstrate  
a supreme Perfection, to which  
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2 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

when Man had once attained, he had no further desires to disturb him, but rested content in an entire and peaceable enjoyment of the chief and most desirable good: And this they called a state

*Humane Felicity.*

*The common condition of life.*

of Happiness or Bliss. Constant and daily experience made it manifest, that the way of living, which most part of Mankind followed, being obnoxious to care and anxiety, labour and pain, trouble and perturbation of thoughts, came far short of that perfection of humane Nature, that rest and tranquillity of mind that Mankind aspired to: And that the various states and conditions of Men, made no difference in the case; seeing Kings, Princes, Magistrates, and

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common People, the Rich and the Poor, the Whole and the Sick, all were dissatisfied and uneasy in their own condition. Wherefore many have made it their business to search out and discover several means, how they might attain to that chief good, which might produce a solid and universal repose in the minds of all Men. But the different bials of passions and inclination so divided and distracted the thoughts of the undertakers, that they were wide of the Mark, and erred in the way of finding true happiness: for some placed *chief good*, in the delights and pleasures of the Body; others in the affluence of Riches; others again in *indolence* or exemption from grief and pain; and some in a freedom from all Passions and Affections:

4      *The Practical Rule*      Part I.

Every one in their several Studies and Actions, pursued the end they had proposed to themselves, and laid down Maxims and Rules for others to do the like, whom by large promises and exhortations, they invited to the same course of life.

However the Opinion of those who placed the chief end and happiness of Man in bodily delights, pleasures and sensual lusts, in the judgment of the wiser, hath been totally exploded; As not only in the act and enjoyments of delights and pleasure; but also in the manner of attaining to them, rendering the nature of Man inferiour and more unhappy than that of Beasts.

But the opinion of those who made the perfection of life chiefly to consist in the soundness of the mind,



mind, and in virtue; tho in general it was approved; yet the determination of the things that did constitute, and the method prescribed for arriving at that felicity, were found liable to so many errors and difficulties, that being measured by, and compared with the standard of true happiness, they were at length condemned and rejected as ineffectual. For some being ignorant of the true Original of the Souls of Men, and not acknowledging God for the author of them; they fancied to themselves a certain perfection of Virtue, which they were so far from attaining to, that neither they, nor their Disciples could ever reach within the view thereof. Some again, tho they knew God to be the Supreme and true Author of Humane

b 3

Nature,

Nature, yet they owned him not to be the chief end and happiness of Man; and tho, indeed, they might acknowledge that, yet without the revealed will of God himself, they could not rightly understand how they ought to seek, and by what means come to the enjoyment of him; nay and that also being known, they could not without the assistance of divine Grace, set about the performance of the duties required therein. God was, therefore, in the first place, to be known and applied to by Faith, and that supreme Master to be consulted, who might shew and declare himself and his Doctrine unto them, by those secret and divine ways whereby he can, and is wont to do it: *for without Faith it is impossible to please God.* But the quite

quite contrary course was taken by those, who attributed so much to the industry and sharpness of humane understanding that they thought that there was nothing to be sought from God, judging it unseemingly a quaint and accurate Philosopher, to have recourse to the will of God, as being the act rather of a slothful Soul, than of a prying and inquisitive Mind, that searched into the nature of things. That Man might and ought of himself find out the excellent nature of Virtue, carefully and industriously pursue after, and labour to obtain it, and having obtained it, preserve and improve the same: which tho' they promised to themselves, and endeavoured to accomplish; yet seeing they were neither rooted in Faith, nor had

begged and desired the aid of di-  
 vine Grace; their search was in  
 vain, so that no where finding  
 what they lookt for; they fatal-  
 ly missed themselves and those  
 that followed them: And losing  
 all hopes of attaining to the hap-  
 piness they proposed, they at  
 length degenerated into the basest  
 and most corrupt kind of life.  
 This the Holy Ghost takes no-  
 tice of, and thus condemns, *Eph.*  
*4. This I say therefore and testi-*  
*fie in the Lord, that ye hence-*  
*forth walk not as other Gentiles*  
*walk in the vanity of their mind,*  
*having the understanding darkned,*  
*being alienated from the life of*  
*God, through the ignorance that is*  
*in them, because of the blindness of*  
*their heart, who being past feel-*  
*ing, have given themselves over un-*  
*to lasciviousness to work all Un-*  
*clean:*

*cleanness with greediness.* They again who were not without a sense and knowledge of God, but would not conform to a steady and sure rule of Conduct, studying rather to follow their own humour, than to comply with the simplicity of truth, have broached most idle Notions of the excellence of the divine Nature, and erroneous and most dangerous Perswasions of the way of imitating the same; leading most part of Mankind first into error and a snare, and then into utter destruction; as it is written: *Rom. i. The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath*

shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even the Eternal Power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools: and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds and four-footed Beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped  
and

and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore. The Doctrine therefore of Men that had no conformity to the Faith of God, or that fell off from the knowledge of God, unto Vanity, false and foolish imaginations, could neither rightly define, nor exhibit and declare the true happiness of Mankind. That only Doctrine which the revealed Will of God doth teach, is capable through the power and goodness of its author, to perform what it hath promised to those who truly and sincerely become its Disciples. For the Scripture saith, *Psal. 119. The Proud have digged Pits for me, which are not after thy Law. All thy Commandments are Righteousness.*

There

There are many instances which manifestly prove, that the Doctrine of the word of God hath fulfilled and made good what it promised and foretold to the true Disciples and followers thereof; and that it can and daily does perform the same, to those who are guided thereby. Now this Doctrine hath promised Salvation, eternal happiness and the inheritance of the kingdom of Heaven, in and through the Son of God, who was to be sent into the World, and the descent of the Holy Ghost into the minds of Believers, which as a sure pledge and earnest of the celestial inheritance, might by his inspirations teach them the true and saving use of the Heavenly gifts and Graces; of this the Disciples of our Lord had experience, as the holy



ly Ghost himself bears witness.  
 2. Pet. 1. Simon Peter, a Servant  
 and an Apostle of Jesus Christ to  
 them that have obtained the like  
 precious Faith with us, through  
 the righteousness of God, and our  
 Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and  
 Peace be multiplied unto you through  
 the knowledge of God, and of Je-  
 sus our Lord, according as his di-  
 vine Power hath given unto us all  
 things that pertain unto life and  
 godliness, through the knowledge of  
 him that hath called us to glory and  
 virtue: whereby are given unto us  
 exceeding great and precious pro-  
 mises; that by these you might be  
 partakers of the divine nature, ha-  
 ving escaped the corruption that is  
 in the World through lust. The  
 Apostle St. Paul treating of the  
 vanity of the Doctrine of the  
 Gentiles, and of the truth and be-  
 nefits.

nefits of the Christian Discipline,  
 says to the same purpose, Eph. 4.  
 But ye have not so learned Christ;  
 if so be that ye have heard him,  
 and have been taught by him, as  
 the truth is in Jesus: That ye put  
 off concerning the former conversa-  
 tion, the old man, which is corrupt  
 according to the deceitful lusts: And  
 be renewed in the spirit of your  
 mind; and that ye put on the new  
 man, which after God is created in  
 righteousness, and true holiness.  
 Acts 3. Ye are the Children of  
 the Prophets, and of the Covenant  
 which God made with our Fathers,  
 saying unto Abraham, and in thy  
 Seed shall all the kindreds of the  
 earth be blessed. Unto you first God  
 having raised up his Son Jesus, sent  
 him to bless you, in turning away  
 every one of you from his iniqui-  
 ties.

Now

Now that state and condition to which the true Disciples and Followers of the Christian Doctrine are by the grace and goodness of God advanced, does in honor, dignity, and amplitude of glory and bliss far exceed all that the natural Man, the Wit of Philosophers, and the pains and study of mortal Man can conceive, define or comprehend, without the special favour and assistance of divine grace: *Isa. 64.* For, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. *1 Cor. 2.* But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what Man knows the things of a Man, save the Spirit.

*Spirit of Man that is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God. This state and condition may in some measure, indeed, be delineated and described, which by the help of God, in time and place convenient we shall attempt: but that will be but a faint emblem and adumbration, rather than a true and lively representation of the same; for the fulness of this solid and excellent happiness, is not to be expressed in the common way of speech, nor conceived by the thoughts of men, unless of those who by the influence and operation of the Holy Ghost, are rendred capable of so great mysteries. Eph. 3. For this cause, saith the Apostle, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family*  
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in Heaven and Earth is named,  
that he would grant you according  
to the riches of his glory, to be  
strengthened with might, by his spi-  
rit in the inner man; that Christ  
may dwell in your hearts by Faith;  
that ye being rooted and grounded  
in love, may be able to comprehend  
with all Saints, what is the breadth,  
and length, and depth, and height;  
and to know the love of Christ,  
which passeth knowledge, that ye  
might be filled with all the fulness  
of God.

Now, although a Disciple of  
this Christian Doctrine may not at  
first, comprehend the greatness  
and excellence of the state to  
which he is called, until by divine  
favour he hath attained to it; ne-  
vertheless the dignity and extent  
of the happiness is not therefore  
less, nor will it by any disappoint-  
ment

ment be diminished ; for the most faithful Author of this Doctrine will abundantly and to the full perform what he hath promised tho in the beginning it be unknown to believers, seeing he who freely and graciously hath promised, standeth not in need of the goodness of others, nor is made poorer by conferring his own ; but by how much the more he is liberal and bountiful, by so much the riches of his goodness and inexhaustible mercy does increase : *Rom. 10. For the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.* Whether, then, the reward of the Discipline of Christ, be fully known to his followers, or but darkly shadowed out to them ; yet it shall not be denied to those who with a pure and holy heart seek after it, nor shall

shall it want any thing of that  
amplitude and fulness, which the  
divine nature of the thing it self,  
and the Majesty, Authority and  
Bounty of him that promises it,  
does require. Esa. 55. For as  
the Heavens are higher than the  
Earth, so are my ways higher than  
your ways, and my thoughts than  
your thoughts. For as the rain com-  
eth down, and the snow from Hea-  
ven, and returneth not thither, but  
watereth the Earth, and maketh it  
bring forth and bud, that it may  
give seed to the sower, and bread to  
the eater: so shall my word be that  
goeth forth of my mouth: it shall  
not return unto me void, but it shall  
accomplish that which I please, and  
it shall prosper in the thing whereto  
I sent it, for ye shall go out with  
joy, and be led forth with peace:  
the Mountains and the Hills shall  
break

break forth before you into singing, though  
 and all the trees of the field shall  
 clap their hands. Instead of the  
 Thorn shall come up the Fig-tree,  
 and instead of the Bryar shall come  
 up the Myrtle tree: and it shall  
 be to the Lord for a name, for a  
 everlasting sign that shall not  
 cut off. A clear proof of this  
 appears in Abraham, whom God  
 heretofore, having selected and  
 separated him from the Doctrines  
 and Manners of the Gentiles, pro-  
 posed as an excellent pattern to  
 be imitated by those who would  
 embrace and submit to this Dis-  
 cipline; how he having received  
 and by firm Faith believed the  
 promise of an earthly inheritance  
 did not instantly know what ex-  
 tent of Land was assured to him  
 referring that to the Almighty  
 who had made the Promise: but  
 thought



thought it was enough for him to  
 rely on the promises of the God  
 of the whole Earth, who having  
 freely spoken the word, was best  
 able, and most willing to per-  
 form it. And no sooner was the  
 Promise made, but he trusting it,  
 obeyed the command and submit-  
 ted to the conditions enjoined  
 him: Gen. 12. For the Lord  
 said unto Abraham, get thee out of  
 thy Country, and from thy kindred,  
 and from thy Fathers house, unto  
 a Land that I will shew thee, and I  
 will make of thee a great Nation;  
 and I will bless thee, and make  
 thy Name great; and thou shalt  
 be a blessing. And I will bless them  
 that bless thee, and curse him that  
 curseth thee: and in thee shall all  
 families of the Earth be blessed.  
 So Abraham departed, as the Lord  
 had commanded him, knowing  
 neither

neither whither he went, nor how large the possession was, that he was to have: which the Apostle observing, saith: *By Faith Abraham when he was call'd to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went: wholly trusting to the word of him who could and would perform more than he was able either to ask or think, and looking upon it as his duty to obey the Master whose Disciple he was, that had promised him a large inheritance, to be revealed and discovered unto him in due time; as the event made appear.* For *Abraham* having made a considerable progress in the discipline he had embraced, being called by God to whose institution he had resigned himself, was fully instructed

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sted by him, not only in the ex-  
tent of the Earthly inheritance,  
but of the Heavenly Blessings al-  
so, which were shadowed and ty-  
pified thereby; as it is written:  
*Gen. 13. And the Lord said unto*  
*Abraham, after that Lot was sepa-*  
*rated from him, lift up now thine*  
*eyes, and look from the Place*  
*where thou art, North-ward, and*  
*South-ward, and East-ward, and*  
*West-ward. For all the Land which*  
*thou seest, to thee will I give it,*  
*and to thy Seed for ever. And I*  
*will make thy Seed as the dust of*  
*the Earth: so that if a Man can*  
*number the dust of the Earth, then*  
*shall thy Seed also be numbred. A-*  
*rise, walk through the Land, in the*  
*length of it, and in the breadth of*  
*it: for I will give it unto thee.*  
*Wherefore seeing no Man can*  
*doubt but that what things God*  
*hath*

24 *The Practical Rule* Part I

hath promised, will more fully be accomplished, than he who is to receive them can wish for, or think; it will be the duty of a true Believer and Disciple of Christ, to set diligently about the performance of the conditions imposed upon him, and to leave the blessings and favours which he does expect to the arbitrement of him, to whose conduct and doctrine he hath resigned himself even to God Almighty the powerful and rich Father of all Mercies, who maketh it to rain upon the Just and the Unjust, and who by the mouth of his own Son, in whom he hath spoken and made the greatest of promises to us, hath promised to give his good Spirit to those that seek him. For if he most graciously fulfilled what at sundry

times

times and in divers manners he spake and promised unto the Fathers by the Prophets; and if the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, how can we be denied or disappointed of any thing that hath been promised to us by the Son of his Love; the faithful interpreter of his Will, and bountiful dispenser of his Grace and Mercies. This made a most approved Apostle, who by his own and the experience of others was convinced of that truth, break out in thankfulness to God: *Rom. 8. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?* So that on the part of him that promises no doubt can be made nor any impediment

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interpose, why those things which have been promised, should not superabundantly be fulfilled: *Luke 6. good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.* And the truth of this Christian Doctrine for ever stands firm and unshaken, *Tit. 1. According to the Faith of Gods Elect, and the acknowledging of the truth, which is after godliness: In hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie, promised before the World began; but hath in due times manifested his word. Heb. 6. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the Promise. For Men verily swear by the greater*

greater: and an Oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an Oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the Vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.

It remains then, which is the design of this little Book, that we handle the Parts and Offices that are incumbent on Believers and the Scholars of Christ, but

28 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

especially those which indifferently concern all ranks, ages, and conditions of Men, and without which their learning will be in vain, and the Doctrine insignificant. Let every one then, whether King or Priest, Prince or States-man, private or publick, rich or poor, Bond or Free, Father or Son, Husband or Wife, Young or Old, Merchant or Artificer, Soldier or Peasant, Learned or Unlearned, provided he profess himself to be a Disciple and Follower of Christ and Christian Doctrine, provided he be Baptized into the Faith of the Catholick Church, without which there is no Salvation; let every one, I say, learn in what Station soever he be, how he ought to keep his Post, behave and carry himself in this World, and that from the Precepts



cepts and Institutions of the Holy Ghost himself, who ought to be his Guide, and not from us, who do but, as Students in the same School, deliver to our fellow Scholars the Precepts and Doctrine of our great Master who hath called us from Darkness to his marvellous Light, and let him take it in good part, if perchance we inculcate some things which way seem hard and uneasy to the Manners, Customs and Opinions of this present Age, not interpreting what we say as a reproof to any person in particular; but judging it the duty of a faithful Minister and Servant, to declare and manifest to his fellow servants the Will of the Lord in his own words; whereby if any Man out of Conscience, Ignorance or Fear shall think himself censured, he must

30 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

not be offended with the Doctrine and Precepts which are Just and Holy, nor with his fellow Servant who delivers them, but with himself, his faults and vices, who having professed this Doctrine, hath not submitted himself to the Laws and Conditions thereof, which are Constant, Universal and Immutable, and not made and published, that according to the desire, humour, lust and counsels of every private man, they may be altered and changed; but which command Obedience by changing all those Desires, Passions, Lusts, and Counsels that may be a hindrance to the punctual observation of the same, our Lord himself having said, *Mat. 5. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy*  
*but*

but to fulfill. That is, to make those who believe in me, pure, holy, and faithful in observing and fulfilling the same. For verity I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Now if the entry into the Kingdom of Heaven be denied to those, whose righteousness and obedience to the Laws

of God, does not exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, not of the wicked and hypocrites, but of the good Scribes and Pharisees, who seemed most to excel in the study of observing the Law: what will become of him, who through hatred, or favour of Man, shall pervert, change, conceal, dissemble, or any other ways make void the rules of righteousness that he is to deliver to his fellow Christians, and teach so? He shall, indeed, be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven, and deemed unworthy to be admitted into that Heavenly Communion and Society, into which all that are received, are called Kings and great. Now, to be a King, and to be the least are inconsistent; hence it follows that in the Kingdom of Heaven,

Heaven, it is the same thing to be the least, and to be none; for no man that breaketh the Commandments of God and teacheth others so to do, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but they only shall enter, whose righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and who being not only hearers, but doers of the Law, shall be justified before God.

Wherefore if in the Precepts, Rules, and Instructions of the Doctrine that hath been delivered unto us, any thing may seem to any Man stricter than his own Will, Opinion, or predominant Affections can comply with, or submit unto, let him, if he intends to enter into life, be persuaded, that neither the way which God hath once fenced in,

34 *The Practical Rule* Part. I.

is to be changed or enlarged, nor that strait and narrow Gate made wider, for the sake of any particular Person; and that he must become Humble, Lowly, and poor in Spirit, striving to walk in the narrow way, and to enter at the strait Gate, which will not be difficult to those who truly love this Doctrine, and earnestly implore the assistance of Divine Grace, that will be denied to none who dutifully and carefully submit to the rules and dictates of this Discipline. For, *Psal.* 145. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. And so he shall understand that the ways of the Lord are broad and pleasant*  
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to those who as Pilgrims and Strangers abstaining from, and renouncing the carnal desires that war against the Soul, and becoming poor in Spirit, undertake that holy Journey and enter into the right way; as the Royal Psalmist saith. *Psal. 119. And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy Precepts. I will speak of thy Testimonies also before Kings, and will not be ashamed. And I will delight my self in thy Commandments which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy Commandments which I have loved: and I will meditate in thy Statutes.*

I know that good and holy Men will willingly listen to their fellow Christian, and not so much mind the language and learning of him that writes, as the sayings which proceed out of the mouth

mouth of the living God, whose sacred and infallible Authority reaching all men, whether publick or private, the Universal Church hath always owned and asserted, and that they will take in good part, whatsoever may be said by us which perhaps may tax the corrupt manners of our present times; being perswaded that Christian Simplicity, Virtue and Probity are always in force, and beyond exception and reproach, not only upon their own accounts, but because of our purpose and design also, who heartily love all holy and good Men tho unknown, neither hate any who may have fallen from the truth, or degenerated from the Virtues of the Gospel, but wish that all may repent and be saved through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom therefore

we



we would have rightly admonished of their Duty. As for the wiser, who stand not in need of our Admonition, we trust, they will put a favourable construction on our care and endeavours for the common salvation of Mankind; who tho we be simple, and unable to contribute any thing to the information of the wise, yet to those who are weaker in knowledge ought to perform what service and good offices we in our power. Now the sum of all our Admonition shall consist of plain Sentences from the Oracles both of the Old and New Testament, the weight of which is such, that neither humane wisdom can resist, nor the craft and subtilty of our adversary evacuate the force of them; and by this means we may be helpful  
both

both to those who admit of nothing in dispute, but what is taken from holy Scripture, and to those also who rightly think, that truth wherever it be found, ought to be embraced : for to both these it is our design to do good, not alleging all that might be said, but only such things as we shall have reason to think may be profitable to all, and hurtful to no body.

The whole Christian Discipline then may be comprehended under two general Heads, which every true Disciple and follower of Christ, ought to know and dutifully practise. The first is, to believe the Word and Promises of God, the Authority whereof hath been confirmed by Signs, Miracles and manifest Testimonies. Now Signs and Miracles are neither at present necessary, nor are they, nor indeed

indeed ought to be required; as being of old seen and approved, reiterated likewise, and confirmed, and received and believed by the Universal Church of God: for concerning these, it is written, *Dent. 32. Remember the days of old, consider the years of many Generations: ask thy Father and he will shew thee, thy Elders, and they will tell thee.* Wherefore it is not now to be doubted, what it is, or how we ought to believe; for that is reduced into certain Points, which are called Articles, and proposed by the Church to be learned, under the name of the Apostles Creed, briefly and plainly comprehending all the Points of our Faith, which have been largely commented upon and explained, in the many writings of holy and learned Men.

Neither

Neither is our discourse directed to those that do not believe, but to such as believe, or at least profess they believe the Word and Promises of God to their own Salvation, and confess that there is no necessity of Miracles, nor any doubt of the Salvation sent into the World, and wrought by Jesus Christ; *Heb. 2. Which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by those that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will.*

The second Head and Branch of Doctrine is, the knowledg and practice of Piety, of which at present we are to treat. Now, for illustration sake, we call Pie-

ty,

ty, all that which every faithful Disciple and Follower of Christ and the Christian Doctrine, believing the Promises, ought to know, hold fast, and practise, no Man being excepted who having the right use of his Reason, can know and perform the same, seeing the assistance of the divine Grace that is necessary to that knowledg and practise, will not be wanting nor denied to those who, as we said before, diligently and seasonably beg the same, but will rather be plentifully supplied by the Father of Light, *1 Tim. 2. who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledg of the Truth*; even those who are strangers to the knowledg of the Truth, and much more such as embrace the known Truth, and study to hold fast and improve

42 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

prove it. Now we say, that it becometh a Disciple of Christ, to know the chief Precepts and Institutions of the Doctrine of Piety which he professes: for tho to know the least Points be neither the duty, nor is it required of all; yet those things which belong to all in general, and every Disciple in particular, are not to be unknown. For how dare he profess and call himself a Disciple, who knows not the Heads of that Discipline which he does and ought to follow? And by what right can he expect to be acknowledged a Scholar by the Master, who knows not the Precepts and Institutions of his Teacher? And to that purpose is this, which by a Disciple is written to his fellow Scholars: *1 Cor. 14. If any Man think himself to be a Prophet,*

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Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord. But if any Man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. If any Man know not the Commands of God, he shall not be known by our Lord and Master, who will say, *Mat. 25. I know you not.* And again, to every one that hath shall be given: but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath. In another place making a difference betwixt those who believe and know the Will of God, and those who do not, the Lord saith, *Luke 12. And that Servant which knew his Lords Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes,*

44 *The Practical Rule* Part I

*stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.* Wherefore leaving those who know not the Will of the Lord, such as are they to whom the knowledg of the Gospel hath not as yet reached; our discourse is to those, who have known, or at least have professed to know the Will of the Lord, who ought to prepare themselves and do according to his Will; to whom the Apostle saith, *1 Thes. 4. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification, to which Men ought to prepare themselves.* Now, no Man can be so prepared, if he be ignorant by what means and actions that Preparation is to be set about and accomplished: for tho one may set about it with all imaginable care and study, yet unless

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he square the same according to the rules and and directions of the Divine Will, he will at length find it to be unprofitable. And this God Almighty himself plainly declares to those, who moved with a pious study and zeal, yet proposed to themselves other courses, than were enjoined them by his Counsel and Precepts. *Isa. 48.* Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go. Oh that thou hadst hearkned to my Commandments: then had thy Peace been as a River, and thy Righteousness as the Waves of the Sea. From which holy Sentences, it follows, that every Disciple ought at least to know the chief Heads of the Discipline that is profitable unto him;

him; those, I mean, which may be known, retained and practised by all, and require neither much Labour, great Study, a deep Watchfulness, nor length of Time, nor far Travelling for attaining to the knowledge of them; as it is written, *Deut. 30. 12. For this Commandment which I command thee this day, is not hid from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in Heaven that thou shouldst say, who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou shouldst say, who shall go over the Sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.*

This Piety then, that is to be known and practised by us, is

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vided into three parts : to wit, *Fear, Repentance, and Charity*, with the observation of the Laws of God ; which whosoever being rightly taught, shall keep and observe, they will through the most bountiful Promise and Covenant of God, confirm and encrease to him the Grace and Mercy of the Lord, to his own Salvation, and at length bring him to the possession and enjoyment of the Kingdom of Heaven. For such is the efficacy that the Will and bounteous Liberality of God hath granted to these three Parts, or Virtues, if you had rather call them so, that he whose mind is filled and endowed with them, may thereby avoid the wrath and dreadful Judgment of God, and find Grace and Mercy in the Eyes of the Almighty.

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In the first place then, they who would practise the Duties of Christian Piety, must have their minds filled with a divine Fear; that is, with an awe, reverence, and watchful observation of those things, which are known to be either acceptable or displeasing to God, that they may wholly detest, flie and abhor the last, and with all care and diligence pursue and seek after the first. For that disposition, whereby the mind so reverences God, that it wills nothing which may offend that immense goodness, and rejects nothing which it knows to be conform to the Will of God; that disposition of mind, I say, is called the fear of the Lord, and is said to be the beginning of all true Wisdom, which by another name also the Latins have called Religion.

gion. Philosophers have divided this into a servile and filial fear, and the Christian School have admitted the same distinction, condemning the servile fear so far, as it was a forerunner to, and made way for the filial. But we, whose design it is not so much to dispute nicely about these matters, as to accommodate them to vulgar capacities, and to square our discourse according to the rule of sacred Oracles, following the definition given by the Holy Ghost, call this fear of the Lord, Religion or Reverence, whereby the mind of an holy Man being affected, observes and follows what he knows to be acceptable to God: and on the contrary rejects and shuns what is displeasing to him. Wherefore this pious disposition of mind is by Wisdom

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so defined: *The fear of the Lord is the beginning* (or principal part) *of Wisdom*, that is to say, a Religious observation of those things which by Knowledge or Wisdom, we know to be desired or shunned. Now by Wisdom in this place, is to be understood the knowledge and notices of the divine Will, whether attained by word, writing, or tradition or by revealed rules and rational intimations.

Now this divine Fear puts him in whose heart it is, upon the exercise of true repentance, inclines him to the Study and observation of the Laws of God, and stimulates him up to a search and diligent enquiry into the nature of both. For when once a Man hath resolved with himself to reverence and practise all the

he knows to be acceptable to God, and to flie and shun those things which do displease him; he makes it his chief care to learn what it is that God approves of, and what he condemns; and being so taught, he implores the assistance of the divine Grace, repents of the former sins of his mispent life, and proposes to himself the way of Gods Commandments, wherein persisting in a steddy and uninterrupted course, he is made partaker of the Heavenly Promises stipulated by the Covenant of Grace, and enjoys the fellowship and communion of that blessing, which the Father of Love has promised, can, and will make good to them who believe in him, and which, in effect, he hath fulfilled to those who have obeyed his most Just and Holy Will.

Wherefore the Wisdom of God knowing what extraordinary fruits spring from this root of divine fear; that it might dehorte Men from the violation of the Laws of God, and deter them from the danger of everlasting Wrath and indignation; by the mouth of the Son of Sirach; calleth *Ecclus. 1. The fear of the Lord, a Crown of Wisdom, Honour, and Glory, and Gladness, and a Crown of Rejoycing.* And to explain and commend it more effectually and plainly, saith, *that the fear of the Lord is a Fountain of Life.* The fear of God is therefore called the beginning and fountain of Life, because reclaiming Man from the violation of the Laws of God, and inducing him to true repentance, it sets him upon the keeping and performance of the Commandments



mandments, that he may obtain Grace and Mercy in the sight of the Almighty, whereby he becomes the son of God and heir of eternal Life, through the most gracious Promise and Covenant of that God, who freely and of his own accord takes upon himself the care, conduct, instruction and sanctification of all those who cleave unto him by Faith and true Obedience; and therefore the Royal Psalmist sings: *Psal. 145. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them: and in another place, Psal. 103. For as the Heaven is high above the Earth: so great is his Mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us, Like as a Father pitieth*

his Children: so the Lord patieth  
 them that fear him. And again. *The*  
*Mercy of the Lord is from everlasting*  
*to everlasting upon them that fear*  
*him.* By all which, we are taught  
 that the never failing Mercy of  
 God is infinite & eternal to those  
 who filled and animated with di-  
 vine Fear, follow the ways of  
 Godliness: which Fear, as we  
 have said, is the beginning, or  
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 is, it is a reverent care to avoid  
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 the Majesty of God. And there-  
 fore the holy Mother of our Lord  
 affirms: *Luke 1. That his Mer-*  
*cy is on them that fear him, from*  
*Generation to Generation;* there-  
 by intimating, that that divine  
 and inexhaustible Mercy was in  
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the Lord. And, indeed, divine Wisdom hath by many and frequent Testimonies and Oracles out of the mouths of all the Prophets and Holy Men, asserted the Dignity and Excellence of the Fear of God; and amongst others by that of the Son of Sirach: *Ecclus. 25. Oh how great is he that findeth Wisdom! yet there is none above him that feareth the Lord.* For Knowledge and Wisdom do, indeed, illuminate and instruct the Mind; but that holy Fear of the Lord turns the heart effectually unto God, and inclines it to the Obedience and Observation of the Precepts of the divine Law. As the same Son of Sirach does expressly teach, *Ecclus. 2. saying, My Son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for Temptation. Set thy Heart*

aright, and constantly endure, and make not hast in time of trouble. Cleave unto him, and depart not away, that thou maist be encreased at thy last end. Whatsoever is brought unto thee take chearfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate. For Gold is tried in the Fire, and acceptable Men in the Furnace of Adversity. Believe in him, and he will help thee; order thy way aright and trust in him. Ye that fear the Lord, wait for his Mercy, and go not aside, lest ye fall. Ye that fear the Lord, believe him, and your reward shall not fail. Ye that fear the Lord, hope for good, and for everlasting Joy and Mercy. Look at the Generations of old, and see: did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded? Or did any abide in his fear, and was forsaken? Or, whom

whom did he ever despise, that called upon him? For the Lord is full of Compassion and Mercy, Long-Suffering, and very Pitiful, and forgiveth Sins, and saveth in time of Affliction. Wo be to fearful hearts, and faint hands, and the sinner that goeth two ways. Wo unto him that is faint-hearted, for he believeth not, therefore shall he not be defended. Wo unto you that have lost Patience: and what will ye do when the Lord shall visit you? They that fear the Lord, will not disobey his Word, and they that love him, will keep his ways. They that fear the Lord, will seek that is well pleasing unto him, and they that love him shall be filled with the Law. They that fear the Lord will prepare their heart, and humble their Souls in his sight, saying, we will fall into the hands of the

58 *The Practical Rule* Part. I.

*Lord, and not into the hands of men: for as his Majesty is so is his Mercy.* Nor do the holy Scriptures affirm only that the Fear of God is an useful, proper and effectual means for working out our own Salvation; but also that it is absolutely necessary, and without which no Man can be saved; seeing he who is not endowed with this Religious and Godly Fear, can neither rightly set about, nor with a steady and constant purpose of mind, go through with the work of Repentance; nor yet faithfully keep the Laws of God, as they ought to do, who endeavour to approve themselves to God, and procure the blessing of Justification and Christian Sanctification. And therefore it was the Decree and Purpose of Heaven that a messenger

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of the Salvation which was coming into the World, should as a fore-runner be sent before, to Preach the Repentance and observation of the Divine Laws to Men, and by that means prepare the way for Christian Righteousness. *Mat. 3. For John the Baptist came preaching in the Wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, saying. The voice of one crying in the Wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths streight.* For the same purpose the Apostles were sent out by Jesus Christ the Author and High-Priest of our Salvation, to Publish and Preach this necessary Duty of Repentance: for, as the Evangelist saith, *Mark 6. They went out and Preach-*  
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*ed that Men should Repent.* The Apostles excepted none that heard them, and desired to be partakers of the Salvation which they Preached, from the Duty and Care of Repentance. The Apostle *Paul* affirms before King *Agrippa*, that he was enjoined and had performed the same duty, both towards the Jews and Gentiles, without any distinction: *Preaching throughout all the wastes of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.* When the Jews and others at *Jerusalem* asked the question, what was to be done by those who desired to be saved, *St. Peter* answered: *Acts 2. Repent and be Baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of Sins,*  
and



*and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the Promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* It might be proved by above six hundred Testimonies from the Holy Scripture, that without the fear of the Lord and Repentance, which is the second Head of Doctrine we now treat of, and without the keeping and observation of the Laws of God, no Man that is come to Age, and that knows God and the nature of good and evil, can obtain remission of sins, and the inheritance and enjoyment of the Kingdom of Heaven. This, our Saviour himself, the best Interpreter of his Fathers will asserts, saying, *Luke 13. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish: Mat. 5.*  
*and*

and except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Now seeing the word Repentance is often to be mentioned in this little Book, that it may clearly appear what we mean, we are to take notice that Repentance comprehends two things; a detestation and forsaking of our sins and ill life past, and an earnest and sincere practice and performance of those Virtues, Acts, and Deeds which are known to be acceptable to God. As to the first part, that is, the detestation and forsaking of sin and a sinful life; that Repentance chiefly relates to it, which is enjoined and taught by the Christian Church; of which the particulars are, the sorrow and contrition of heart, the confession

cession of the mouth, and satisfaction in deed; to use the common phrase and expression of the learned: for knowing the nature whereof, we shall refer you to the Books of the Learned who have fully handled and discussed that Point; being resolved here only to treat of the Virtue and Grace of Repentance, which is the end and complement of that other part: for it is not enough to lament and bewail what is past, as is commonly said, to confess our sins, and not commit the same again; unless they who can, do bring forth fruits worthy of Repentance. And therefore this part, which consists in the amendment of life, and in the exercise and practice of Righteousness, otherwise called the Virtue and Grace of Repentance, is the subject

ject whereof we shall treat at present.

Now the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures makes this *Repentance* the Grace of Heavenly Wisdom, to consist chiefly in this; That Man should war against his own Lusts, subdue and overcome his natural affections, abstain from worldly and carnal works, and with all care and industry endeavour to perform what is commanded and approved of by God. For this Law was laid upon the first Parent of Mankind, by that Mysterious and Divine Oracle, delivered under the Name and Figure of the Earth, *Gen. 3. Cursed is the Earth for thy sake; in Sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.*

*field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.* God declared to Man that that humane Earth called *Adam*, from whence he himself had the name of *Adam*, was for his sake, that is, for his transgression of the Command of God, cursed and made disobedient, foretelling him, that in sorrow and labour he should eat of the fruits of that earth, which was not, through the curse become altogether so barren, that it would bring forth no good fruit, but that the good and profitable fruit which it did bring forth, must be the effect of much labour and pain. For as that Earth was of it self, to bring forth nothing but Thorns and Thistles, that is, various difficulties springing from Lust and Pride, which must be rooted out by him who desires to feed

feed on good and generous fruits; so there is need of indefatigable pains and labour, even to the sweat of the brow, that is, to the mastering and disciplining the Will and Affections, that by so doing he may obtain that heavenly bread which God hath promised, fully to bestow upon those, who in that manner work out their own Salvation. Many Oracles of divine Scripture confirm the truth of this; as, Rev. 2. & 3. *To him that overcometh and keepeth my works to the end, will I give to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God, and a Crown of Life. And I also will give him to eat of the hidden Manna; and will give him a white stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. And I will give him*

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the Morning-Star, and he shall be clothed in white Robes, and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life; but will make him a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the City of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, and my new name. Rev. 21. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second death.

The gracious goodness of God to admonish us of these things, and of what concerns our Salvation,

tion, gives to all and every finner this seasonable warning *Reu.*  
*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be cloathed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; be zealous therefore and repent. Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* Most graciously and freely then, does the Lord invite to the joys of his Supper, all who being decently cloathed and prepared as they ought, pray and long for the gladness of that most excellent Feast, which being liberally offered by him that invites them, they shall at length fully enjoy, and rejoyce with him who hath made them partakers of the great-  
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est Promises. But we have a clear Instance, that he who durst come to the Wedding-Feast, not cloathed with the Wedding Garment, which is, Repentance and the observation of the Precepts of Christ, was rebuked by the angry King, and had this dreadful check and sentence: *Mat. 22. Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having the Wedding Garment? Then said the King to his Servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* The Doctrine, therefore, of the Gospel requires not only Faith, but Obedience also, in him who desires to be an Heir of the promised Salvation: and this Obedience begins by a true and unfeigned Repentance, and shews it self in the  
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70 *The Practical Rule* Part I

serious exercise thereof; heavy Judgments being denounced by God upon those who obey not the Law of the Gospel. Now by the Gospel-Law, in this place we mean, the conditions required of them, who really and in effect desire to be made partakers of these glad tidings; for otherwise without Repentance and the observation of the Precepts of God, Men are so far from obtaining the divine Promises, that they must certainly expect the wrath and anger of God; 2 *Thy* 1. *In flaming Fire, taking Vengeance of them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his*

*Saints*

*Saints, and to be admired of all them that believe.*

Now this Wedding-Garment, which every one that is called to the Marriage, and desires to be admitted into that holy Feast, must and ought to be cloathed with, is made up of Repentance, and the observation of the divine Precepts; and that it is so, we have the word of the King himself, the Lord and Master of the Feast for it, who commanded his Servants whom he sent to call the Guests, Saying: *Mat. 22. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you:* That is to say, Repentance, and the study and observation of the Precepts and Commands of God;

God; For so the Lord himself expounds it, who, when he went about performing the office of an Evangelist, taught publickly, *Mark 1.* saying: *The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: Repent ye and believe the Gospel.*

A clear instance of this is to be seen in *Abraham*, whom God proposed as a pattern of his free and most gracious Election, exhibiting unto us under the type and figure of earthly and sensual things the whole and sum of this great mystery: for such was the counsel of God, that what things really and truly happened unto him, the same should shadow out and represent the spiritual blessings which belonged to us. As it is written; *1 Cor. 10.* *All these things happened unto them for ensampler,*

(or

(or types) and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. Abraham being first called, believed in God who had called him, and promised to make him a Father of many Nations; In God I say, who calleth those things which be not as tho they were: and trusted to the divine election, knowing that to be the most acceptable obedience to God, when one willingly and diligently complies with his call, and without doubting, undergoes that saving discipline, as proceeding from him; who being the Fountain of all Goodness, freely bestows himself, His Graces and Blessings, upon those who believe and obey him: so that when he was commanded by him, from whom he had received the Promise, to leave his Country, his Kindred, and his Fa-

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74 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

thers House; he obeyed, and went out, leaving those advantages, which those who live after the manner of this world, reap from their Country, Kindred, and Fathers House; for the native Country affordeth acquaintance and confidence, the Fathers House, Wealth and Riches, and Kindred, Means and Substance to those who lead their lives according to the dictates of Lust and Ambition. *Abraham*, therefore, departed, as the Lord had commanded him, leaving his Country, Kindred, and Fathers House, and chose to be a Stranger and Sojourner in a strange Land, following the Command of God that called him. Now we know, that Strangers and Sojourners have no mind, means, nor confidence, to spend their time in delights, and pleasures, so long as they think of  
their

their condition, and behave themselves like Strangers and Sojourners, and propose to themselves, that that is not their Country or place of rest, but an Inn or place of refreshment, which they must shortly leave, and go forward unto a place of more commodious habitation. So *Abraham* being called and commanded to go out of his Country, into a Land that was to be shewn to him, not only believed, but obeyed and put it in execution: for he really and indeed forsook his Country, Kindred and Fathers House, and not in word and inclination alone. He said not, I will do it, or I desire to do it, and did it not; but actually performed what he was commanded: and in that manner *Abraham* believed in God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness; not that he believed only,

76 The Practical Rule Part I.

but that believing he obeyed, and went out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance, not knowing whither he went. Heb. 11. And that by Faith he Sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Countrey, dwelling in Tabernacles, with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise. According to this precedent, whoever is called to the gifts and blessings of the Heavenly Promises, believes in, and would please him that hath promised, desiring to have them made good unto him, must not only by Faith, Will, and Inclination, but also in Deed and in good Earnest, renounce the Pomp, Vanity, Corruption, Delights, Pleasures, Ambition and other Vices of this World, and perform what he obliged himself to and promised, before the blessed



sed Trinity, (in which he professed his belief,) in presence of his God-Fathers, God-Mothers and Witnesses in his Baptism, through the grace and assistance of him that called him, to whose service he resigned himself, and in whose name he was Baptised, that is, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which grace and assistance will never be wanting to those, who from a pure and holy heart implore and beg the same, as we have already demonstrated:

*Luke 12. I am come to send fire on the Earth, and what will I if it be already kindled?* Now he promised to renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World: and what are the works of the Devil, and Vanities of the World, but Ambition, Lust, Avarice, and

78 *The Practical Rule* Part.I.

the delights and pleasures of the  
Flesh? that is to say, the corrupt  
manners & customs of this World,  
which, according to the Doctrine  
of the Apostles, breed, cherish  
and encrease sin and wickedness,  
as it is written: *1 John 2. Love  
not the World, neither the things  
that are in the World. If any Man  
love the World, the love of the Fa-  
ther is not in him. For all that is  
in the World, the Lust of the Flesh,  
the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride  
of Life, is not of the Father, but  
is of the World.* And again, the  
Apostle S. James saith, *James 4. Ye  
Adulterers and Adulteresses, know  
ye not that the friendship of this  
World is enmity with God? Who-  
soever therefore will be a friend of  
the World, is the enemy of God.  
Do ye think that the Scripture saith  
in vain, The Spirit that dwelleth in*

us, lusteth to envie? Wherefore we must not only by Faith and in words, but in our endeavours, acts, and deeds renounce all worldly Pleasures, Lusts and Ambition; for Virtue consists not in words, but in deeds. And therefore St. Paul saith, 2 Tim. 2. If a Man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work. And St. Peter alluding to Abraham thus admonisheth: 1 Pet. 2. Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as Strangers, and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against the Soul, having your Conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorifie God in

*the day of Visitation.* Wherefore that Faith which is commended and praised in *Abraham*, was not an idle and dead, but a living Faith, quickned by Charity, and shewing it self in the practice and exercise of Obedience, and so it was imputed to him for Righteousness, because he really left his Country, Kindred, and his Fathers house, and obediently went unto the place appointed him; thereby setting before us a lively instance of true Obedience. Which *Moses* imitating, *Heb. 11.* when he was come to years, refused to be called the Child of Pharaohs daughter, chusing rather to suffer affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt: for he had a respect  
unto

unto the recompence of Reward. By Faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King: for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. In deeds then and not in words alone, or an empty and idle boasting of Faith, must every one shew himself obedient to God, and bring forth the fruits of serious Repentance; as in his holy Baptism he promised. But how is that performed by those, who never depart from iniquity? or if they do, it is but for a time, upon occasion of Confessing, or taking the Sacrament, that they may again fall into the same or more heinous crimes, when notwithstanding the conditions required of a Penitent that would worthily receive the Sacrament, are satisfaction and amendment of life; which, if sometime they set about it, they soon forsake, and relapse.

82 The Practical Rule Part. I.

relapse into the accursed manners of a stubborn & inflexible nature, but not he that beginneth, Mat. 24. but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Isa. 1. Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes: cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek Judgment, relieve the oppressed, Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord: though your sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow, tho they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, saith God, who comparing the noble beginnings of Christian simplicity and Piety, with the subsequent corruption of manners, and defect of Repentance and Obedience in his ancient People, thus laments over them:

How

How is the faithful City become an Harlot? It was full of Judgment: Righteousness lodged in it, but now Murderers. Thy Silver is become dross, thy Wine mixt with Water. Thy Princes are rebellious, and companions of Thieves are every one that loveth Gifts, and followeth after Rewards: they judge not the Fatherless, neither doth the cause of the Widow come unto them. That Faith then which is accompanied with Repentance and Obedience, is the Faith whereby Men obtain the gracious promises of God: not, I say, an idle and dead Faith, but that which worketh by Charity, and believes and obeys the word of God, does what is commanded, and is deterred by no difficulties, but rather with heroick resolution and assurance performs whatever is en-

84 The Practical Rule Part. I.

enjoyed it: as it is written. Heb. 11. By Faith they passed through the Red Sea, as by dry Land: which the Egyptians essaying to do were drowned. By Faith the Walls of Jerico fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By Faith the Harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not: when she had received the Spies with Peace. And what shall I now say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Baruch, and of Sampson, and of Jephtha, of David and also Samuel, and of the Prophets: who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of the Fire: escaped the edge of the Sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in Fight, turned to fight the Armies of the Aliens.



*liens. Women received their dead, raised to life again.* So that the Faith of all those shewed it self in great Works, it being their care and study to approve themselves to God not barely by the profession of an idle Faith, but by the obedience and practice of a lively and active Faith, and to omit nothing that for Godliness sake they were commanded to do, and on the contrary, to act nothing, which Religion and Obedience taught them to shun and avoid, and rather to suffer all inconveniencies and losses, even to death and reproach, than to violate those Precepts, which the will and word of God delivered to be observed by them. And therefore they also, have left to Posterity patterns and examples of true Repentance, and Obedience,

86 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

ence, as it follows in the same place: *And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of Bonds and Imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were slain with the Sword, they wandered about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented: of whom the World was not worthy: they wandered in Deserts, and in Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth. And these all having obtained a good report through Faith, received not the Promise: God having provided some better thing for us: that they without us should not be made perfect. The Apostle calls the works of those holy Men, and their practice of Obedience, the Testimony*

stimony of Faith, as well in undergoing and acting what they were commanded to act and undergo, as in declining and shunning those things that were prohibited to be done; and yet they obtained not the Promise, that is, not the full enjoyment of the Kingdom of Heaven, which before the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ was not as yet opened; that they might not be made perfect without us, who came at the eleventh hour, tho they were severally at several hours before us, bore the heat and burden of the day, and wrought diligently in the Vineyard. However, must the reward appointed to be paid first to those, who were called at the eleventh hour, be given to the idle and negligent? By no means: for these  
work-

workmen were not called that they might be idle, but rather, they were rebuked, that they spent almost the whole day in Sloth and Idleness. Why, saith the good Man of the House, stand ye here all day Idle? Now they are call'd idle, who have no work, no business to do; as the Greek word *αργος* employed by the Evangelist does clearly import.

Therefore they who were called and sent into the Vineyard at the Eleventh hour, were not called to an idle lazy Faith only, but to the exercise of a lively Faith in obedience to the Will and Commands of him that called them, and to labour in the Vineyard no less than they who were called before them, whose Faith hath been proved and tried in divers works, much labour and pain.

Now

This

This appears evidently by the Testimony of those who came first, delivered in that excellent Parable; who affirmed that the last wrought but one hour, They said not, that they who were called at that hour, were idle in the Vineyard, but that they wrought: it was favour and bounty enough shewn them by the good Man of the House, that having wrought less, and being excused from the heat and burden of the day, they first of all were rewarded by the gracious bounty of the Lord, who is willing to give to the last, as to the first.

From what hath been said then, it is manifest and clear, that an imputative Faith, only laying hold of the Promises, and otherwise lazy and unactive, is not that Faith which God does require of those,

those, whom he calls to the Communion of Saints, and Inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven; but a lively Faith, and such as exerciseth Believers in the Obedience and Observation of those things that are commanded by him that calleth them. For as it is not enough to lay hold on the Promises barely by Faith, unless we actually enjoy and possess the same; so it is not enough neither, to answer the Call by Faith alone, unless we also pay Obedience to him that hath called us. What Man is he that will say that it is enough for him, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven by Faith, that is, by believing, tho he never attain to the actual fruition and enjoyment of the Kingdom of God? Did God do so with the *Israelites* and the Seed of *Abraham*,

*brabam*, that the Promises which they laid hold on by Faith were never made good unto them? No: for the blessing of God whom they believed and obeyed, they obtained the enjoyment and possession of the earthly Promises. Of *Abraham* a great Nation was really made, and from one *Isaac*, in whom God would have his Seed to be called, there sprang so great a People, that *Moses* confessed; *Dent. 1. I am not able to bear you my self alone: The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and behold you are this day as the Stars of Heaven for multitude. The Lord God of your Fathers make you a thousand times se many as you are, and bless you, as he hath promised you.* The People that were brought out of *Egypt*, who continued in Faith and Holy Obedience,

ence, did actually obtain and possess the promised Land of Canaan; as it is written: *Josh. 1. Arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this People, unto the Land which I do give to them, even to the Children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the Wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great River, the River Euphrates, all the Land of the Hittites, and unto the great Sea toward the going down of the Sun, shall be your Coast. God not long after confirmed the truth of all this. Josh. 14. I have given you a Land for which ye did not labour, and Cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them: of the Vineyards and Oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. David also believing the promise that*

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that he should obtain the Kingdom, endured and overcame the hardest of times and dangers, and having at length obtained the Kingdom, thus did sing: *Psal. 116. I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted. I said in my haste; all Men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me? &c.* So that all these Ancients not only by Faith laid hold on the earthly Promises, but really obtained them, through the blessing of God that promised to fulfil them to those who believed and obeyed him: And therefore they obeyed the Law-giver not by Faith, and in words only, but with all care and dutifulness they also practised true Piety, and performed the Precepts and Commandments, nor did any of those  
who

94 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

who expected the desired Promises, think or say it was enough for him, that his fore-fathers, Predecessors, or Friends had obeyed the Commands and Precepts of God, unless he himself did his duty, in obeying and fulfilling the Law. *Abraham* himself being called went out. *David* being anointed King, and having obtained a Promise of the Kingdom, believed, did, and suffered all those things which we read with admiration. So also, that we may return to our selves, if we desire, as we ought to do, to be truly and indeed, made partakers of the Spiritual Promises; if we have a real love for our selves, and aspire to everlasting bliss, we must not only believe the Promises, but likewise in all sincerity practise Piety, and perform our several duties

duties in obeying those things that are enjoined and commanded us: Nor must we think it enough, that Christ hath fulfilled for us the Law and all Righteousness; unless believing in Christ, we also submit to that part of the Law which belongs to us, to wit; the Precepts and Commands of the *Decalogue*, wherein is comprehended the sum of the Will of God, and Law of Nature, and to whatsoever may be lawfully deduced and inferred from thence; and so obey the Law, that we may not be called Hearers only or Readers, Interpreters or Expounders thereof, but rather Doers of the same, and become like to those, of whom it is written, *Luke 1.* And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless.

less. Rom. 2. *For not the Hearers of the Law, are Just before God: but the doers of the Law shall be justified.* Wherefore whosoever being called to the Marriage of the Son, desires to approve himself faithfully to him that calleth him; He is chiefly to mind that there is nothing hidden from him who searcheth the secrets of the heart and reins, and knoweth the thoughts of Men afar off. And therefore let him seriously set about the duty of true and unfeigned Repentance, and being grieved for all the offences of his illspent, wicked past life, let him with a contrite and humble heart, sincerely confess his sin, and plead guilty in the presence of God, and his Church, that is, of the lawful Ministers of the Church; Piously and Religiously

obey

obey the Counsels, Admonitions and Instructions that are given him, and having received Ecclesiastical Absolution from the sins and wickedness, which he hath promised to God, and to his Minister as a Witness, and Judge upon Earth, to forsake; let him turn with all his mind and might, from that wicked life and filthy conversation, from all impure thoughts, all Guile, Malice and corrupt Manners; and then having shaken off and overcome the Temptations of Pride, Vanity, Covetousness, Lust, Earthly delights and Pleasures, and of whatsoever may, and is wont to turn Men from God; let him constantly persist in the right way, and by diligent and frequent Prayer call upon God, and beg his favourable and gracious assistance, whose

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Mercy

Mercy and provident care over him, he will to his experience certainly find, if from a pure and holy heart he earnestly craves the same: For no less hath been offered and promised to all sinners, by him who willeth not, nor desireth their death, but that rather they may repent and live. Jer. 3. *Return ye back-sliding children, and I will heal your back-slidings.* Jer. 4. *If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me, and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, thou shalt thou not remove. O Jerusalem wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Jer. 29. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give*

you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord. And again, Joel 2. Turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Nevertheless we must always be upon our guard, and take diligent heed, lest securely trusting to past Pardons and the confident expectation of Gods future mercy, we never cease to do evil, and learn to do good: that is not the use, but the

abuse of divine Clemency and Mercy. The Mercy of God is, indeed, from Generation to Generation; but upon those that fear him, and I will hear, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 85. what God the Lord will say: for he will speak Peace unto the People, and to his Saints: but let them not return again to Folly.* Again, *Isaias* saith, *Isa. 30. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you.* The Lord will wait that he may be gracious, saith he, not that they who are waited for, should heap sin upon sin, and return unto the vomit; but because he hath promised mercy to them who with their whole heart so turn unto him, that they stand in awe, and greatly fear any more to offend him: otherwise, as the same Prophet saith, *Therefore will*



*will the Lord be exalted that he may have Mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of Judgment, who denies not his promised Mercy to any that rightly seek it, but withall does not for ever delay, but in due time inflict the punishments, which are appointed to those whose heart is not right and steadfast with him. There is no time with God void of Mercy towards those who hinder not their own Mercy; Now they do hinder it, who after the hardness and impenitence of their heart, treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath. Isa. 66. To this Man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. But concerning those who are not truly poor, of a contrite spirit, and tremble at his word,*

he hath pronounc'd this Sentence: *He that killeth an Ox, is as if he slew a Man: he that Sacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dogs neck, he that Offereth an Oblation, as if he Offèred Swines Blood; he that burneth Incense, as if he blessed an Idol: 1 Kings 8. they have chosen their own ways, and their Soul delighteth in their abominations.* They therefore that have committed sin (for, as Solomon saith, there is no Man that sinneth not) must constantly keep in the way of Repentance, and denying themselves, hear and follow him, who hath said; *Not he that beginneth, but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* They must from their whole heart and Soul, Renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps, and vanities of

of this wicked world, as they have promised and vowed in their Baptism: otherwise, *Jer. 8. thus, saith the Lord, shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away and not return? why then is this People of Jerusalem slidden back, by a perpetual back-sliding?* The Lord calls it a perpetual back-sliding, when men in their manners, retain and follow that wicked course of life, which in word or thought they may have condemned, and falsely professing and boasting of their Repentance, do not conscientiously perform the duty of it, but belying their own hearts, deceive themselves, and not God nor his Minister, to whom they promised a serious amendment of life: This the Lord finds fault with, by the same Prophet. *They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return, I*

*hearkned and heard, but they spake  
 not aright: no Man repented him  
 of his wickedness, saying, what have  
 I done? Every one turned to his  
 Course, as the Horse rusheth into the  
 Battel. The Lord, indeed, waits  
 that he may have mercy upon us,  
 and uses patience, not willing  
 that any should perish, but that  
 all should come to Repentance.  
 Come to Repentance, saith that  
 Apostle, who knew that Repen-  
 tance was necessary to sinners,  
 for appeasing the wrath, and ob-  
 taining the mercy of God. Now  
 the Holy Spirit does plainly tell  
 us, that the long-suffering of God  
 is not everlasting, tho we believe  
 and confesse his Mercy to be infi-  
 nite. Psal. 7. God Judgeth the  
 Righteous, and God is angry with  
 the Wicked every day; if he turn  
 not, he will whet his Sword: he  
 hath*

hath bent his Bow, and made it ready, he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death: He ordaineth his arrows against the Persecutors. When God Almighty was about to destroy the old World, because of sin, he allotted them a certain time to repent in; as it is written, Gen. 6. And the Lord said, my Spirit shall not always strive with Man, for that he also is Flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. At the end of which all Mankind perished in the Flood, save only the Family of Noah, who in that Age was found Righteous in the sight of God. The People of Nimiveh being warned by the Prophet, that after forty days they should be destroyed, delayed not their Repentance until the last day, but set about it so soon as they heard  
the

the denunciation; all that time, I say, was employed and spent in fasting and prayer, for averting the wrath of God, imploring divine mercy and amending their sinful lives: as it is written, *Jona 3.* And Jonah began to enter into the City a days Journey, and he cried, and said, yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the People of Nineveh believed God, and Proclaimed a Fast, and put on Sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least of them: for word came unto the King of Nineveh, and he arose from his Throne, and he laid his Robe from him, and covered him with Sackcloth, and sate in Ashes, and he caused to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh, (by the Decree of the King and his Nobles) saying, let neither Man nor Beast, Herd nor Flock

Flock tast any thing ; let them not feed nor drink water. But let Man and Beast be covered with Sackcloth ; and cry mightily unto God ; yea let them turn every one from their evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not ? and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

The Men of Nineveh will rise in Judgment against those who having been warned not once, but often, yet have not turned from their evil ways ; or who have delayed the duty of a serious Repentance, to the last day of their life, living in the mean time wickedly,

edly, and following the Vanities, Lusts, Ambition, Pride, and Vices of the World: whereas no Man ought, or can say, that he is allowed to put off the exercise of Repentance to the extremity of life; since upon the first call and admonition, all Men are commanded to turn and be converted unto the Lord. *To day, saith the Holy Ghost, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Heb. 4. Let us therefore fear, saith the Apostle, lest a Promise being left us of entering into his Rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel Preached, as well as unto them. Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest. Now he shall not enter, who obeyeth not the voice of him that calleth him, nor he be owned, who hath not lawfully striven.*

I Cor.



1 Cor. 9. Know ye not, saith St. Paul, that they which run in a race, run all, but one winneth the prize? so run that you may obtain. We are to run and not go back, to run and not to stand still, according to the Apostle; We are to run not slowly but lawfully; and with so much more the greater pains, diligence and care, by how much the Prize set before us is to be esteemed and preferred before a Crown of Olive, Smallage, or Oak-leaves. Now what pains and labour they were at to exercise themselves who were to run in the race, that neither Luxury might soften, nor Laziness dull them, they who have written on that Subject, inform us.

Qui

*Qui cupit optatam cursu contin-  
gere metam,*

*Multa tulit, fecitque puer, su-  
davit & alsit,*

*Abstinnit Venere & vino, &c.*

The Youth who strives the  
wish'd goal to obtain,  
Much anxious toil endures,  
colds, heats, and pain,  
And Wine, and Women shuns,  
&c.

And they, as St. Paul saith, are  
temperate in all things, that they  
may obtain a corruptible Crown:  
but we an incorruptible. Now it  
is manifest, that the long-suffer-  
ing and patience of God for the  
repentance of all and every sinner,  
is limited within certain bounds;  
for after death there is no place  
for

for repentance, so that we must,  
(if ever) repent in this life.  
And therefore since experience it  
self convinceth us of the shortness  
of life, besides what divine wis-  
dom teacheth us, *that Man is of few  
days, and the number of his months  
is with thee; Job 14.* we ought to  
consider the extent and limits of  
divine patience and long-suffer-  
ing, and not to trust to that dan-  
gerous hope, which hath decei-  
ved many, who have deferred  
the thoughts of serious repen-  
tance to the very last day of their  
life. For tho the use and improve-  
ment of life be left to the will  
and pleasure of Man, yet the  
time and manner of death is not  
in his option. Now as the way  
and manner of living is two-fold,  
the one large and broad, and the  
other strait and narrow: so it is  
left

112. *The Practical Rule* Part. I.

left to Man to choose which of the two he pleaseth; yet he is not only advised, but even commanded to choose that which is best and latest; as it is written, *Dent. 30.* See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee this day, to love the Lord, thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live, &c. Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days.

Now of the nine hundred and seven ways of death, which are observed to happen unto Man, without violence; it is not left

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to him to choose which of all he would submit unto, but that is reserved to the Providence and Will of God, in whose hands are the issues of death. It is great madness and folly then, and no less dangerous temerity, to neglect those things which are laid before us, as safe, certain, present to our view, and but few in number; and to set our minds on things that are remote, foreign to our happiness, uncertain, many and various, and likewise most difficult. Again, who seeth not, how wicked a thing it is, to expect and desire that the designed and affected loss of our whole life, should be made up by the Prayer of a Minutes or less continuance at last? And that he should look for the honour and prize of the race or fight, who hath

hath neither run nor fought, when yet he might and ought to have done it? In a word, how is his judgment depraved who desires wickedly and carelessly to live, and to die holily? Whatever others may think of this matter, I am little concerned: but am still of opinion, and do affirm that such opinions are full of danger, and that many have been thereby deceived. If the instance of that sinful woman, or of the Thief in the Gospel be objected to us, we shall willingly admit of it for confirmation of the truth, and retort it back again. For that woman who was a sinner in the City, when once she had come to Christ, and found him merciful; by a continued exercise of Repentance, and Sanctity of life for the future, she secured to her

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self his favour and blessing: so far was she from estranging him from her, by new sins and offences. And the Thief at the same time that he was instructed in the truth of Christ, began a serious Repentance which with a constant mind he continued till the last breath of his life, and would in all probability, have continued it longer, if either he had escaped death that day, or hung longer alive upon the Cross: whom that common torment of the punishment, made greater by the breaking of his legs, diverted not from the thoughts of his own Salvation, nor the contemplation of his Saviour. And we have reason to think, that if he had known the grace and truth of Christ before, he would have forsaken his wicked courses, and  
given

given himself wholly to the duties of a serious Repentance. In a word, whatever may be said, it is most certain, that the Thief, to the knowledge of Christ, joyned an extraordinary faith, acknowledged his heinous offences, detested his past life, converted himself wholly to the author of his Salvation,\* enduring not only patiently but contentedly the bitterest torments of death, that he magnified the Justice of God, constantly implored his Mercy, which being promised him, he embraced with a firm and steady Faith, and that at length he obtained salvation through the Mercy and Grace of Christ Jesus, who had promised it. Whoever would make the right use of this instance of the Thief on the Cross, ought exactly to imi-

tate



rate it, that he may at length find the profit and advantage thereof. So soon therefore as he knows that the Son of God, the most innocent Jesus, that Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the World, hath for the offences and wickednesses of the World suffered a most bitter and ignominious death, and that he for his own sins deserved to be in the same condemnation, and to be sentenced to Hell-fire; he ought to bewail and detest his past life, polluted with all sorts of sins and offences; and with a serious and hearty Repentance and sorrow, confess the same; implore divine mercy; so frame his thoughts and desires, as if he were to die the same minute he thinks of these things, that he may, from him who being truly called upon, is  
never

118 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

never wanting, hear those joyful tidings: *Verily I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*: and through the blessing and grace of God upon his good works make sure of this hope, which he hath conceived by Faith. Is it to be thought that if the Thief, after that he received that promise, had lived and been cured, would have been so unmindful of so great a blessing, and of his own Salvation, as to have returned again to his accustomed robberies? or that through an erroneous opinion of the extraordinary mercifulness of Christ, he would have again returned to his vomit, and put off his Repentance till the last hour of his life, when he should be again taken, condemned, and nailed to the Cross? grant that Christ

is most easie to be entreated, as indeed he is, (tho not to those who rather mock God with their Repentance, than are seriously converted) so easie, I say, that seventy and seven times he pardons a sinner, who turns to him in truth; and who commanded his disciples to do the like: yet who dare affirm, that as often as he sinneth, so often the long-suffering of God will wait for his Repentance? who dare be so bold as to desire of the Almighty, that he may lead a corrupt and wicked life, and not want an hours times to repent in, when he is upon the brink of death? Nevertheless what does he seem to desire else, who defers the serious duties of Repentance, that is, the true hatred and renunciation of his vices, with the firm purpose

purpose of virtue and amendment, till the last day of his life? Is that to imitate the Thief, *Mary Magdalene*, or *St. Peter*? who coming to himself, acknowledged his sin, and avoiding that croud by whose company and discourses he had been drawn, and almost forc'd into his offence, went forth and wept bitterly, returning no more to those who had been the occasion of his Fall, but cleaving close to the society of the other Disciples, whom both by example and discourse he confirmed in the hope of their Masters Resurrection; doing as his Lord commanded him: *and thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

These are the instances of Repentance most acceptable to God and profitable to Man, which  
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whosoever will seriously imitate to his own Salvation, must renounce himself, that is, his concupiscences, the pomps and vanities of the World, reform the course of his life, walk carefully in the ways that God does approve of; and having taken up his cross, with a lively Faith, and constant Obedience follow Christ, cast off all impediments that may divert him from, or hinder him in his Journey, and always have in his mind what the Lord hath recommended to our serious practice: *Luke 9. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily and follow me. Mat. 24. And he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And no Man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the King-*

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dom of God. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; God deceiveth no Man. Let every one take heed then, that he deceive not himself, nor suffer himself to be deceived by others. This is the plain, sure and safe way; that hath the promise of good success; Repentance, I mean, which every one ought carefully to set about, persist in, and prosecute to the end. This is the way that never deceived any Man, but will certainly bring those that walk therein to eternal Salvation at last. For it is written, *Psal. 69.* *Psal. 105.* *Your hearts shall live that seek God. Seek the Lord and his strength: seek his face evermore.* He that seeketh his face always in what manner soever he may end this mortal life, yet his Soul shall live. *Psal. 9.* *For thou, Lord*

hast not forsaken them that seek thee. The death of *Lazarus* was mean and obscure in the eyes of Men, but that of the rich Man conspicuous, and his Funeral pompous. *The rich Man died and was buried*: however the Soul of the former was received into *Abraham's* bosom, when this Mans Soul was sent down into Hell. Wherefore let those who either never set about the work of Repentance aright, or put it off to the hour of death, or often in their life-time begin it, and as often again leave it off; let them, I say, consider, what ground they have to do so, and what divine promise they can pretend to trust to; for it is not in our power to command our time when we would, and whether God will grant it to us according to our wishes,

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124 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

wishes, is much to be doubted. As 'tis written: *Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy Statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.* No Doctor of the Christian Church, (for what I know) ever taught us to put off and delay Repentance and amendment of life, till the last day of living; nor promised any happy success to those that did so; nay St. *Austin* doubts of the condition of those delayers of serious Repentance, till the hour of death, and we have no reason but, with St. *Austin*, to doubt of the same. *We be to fearful hearts, and faine hands, and the sinner that goeth two ways.* We will be unto many to whom opportunity and the advantages of amending their lives has been offered and granted, whilst they were alive and in health,



health, and whilst God waited for them, and who still persisting in their wickedness, their too late desire of Repentance, will through their own fault, be unprofitable to them. Many instances of wicked Men, who die without Repentance happen daily; some snatcht away by sudden death, others killed, some cast away at Sea, others slain in Battel, or brought to their end by thunder, lightning, and many other ways: who, perhaps, if their lives had been longer, would have seriously set about the work of Repentance; but it hath seemed otherwise to the Judgment and Decree of God, who, seeing he does all that is necessary for reclaiming of sinners, is not always wont to superadd more than ought to be expected, *Mat.*

11. Had God done the mighty works in Tyre and Sidon, which he did in Chorazin and Bethsaida, he knew, that they would have repented in Sack-cloth and ashes. And if the mighty works which were done in Capernaum, had been done in Sodom, it also, upon the word of our Saviour, would have remained until this day. But seeing the Almighty had done for those places what was enough, in his most righteous Judgment, he was not willing to add more than was sufficient. How many of those, who have led a wicked and sinful life, and still professed an inclination and desire to die well, have either had the death they wished for, or a blessed and happy end? How every Man shall end his days, depends not on himself, but on the Counsel and Decree

Decree of God; as it is written, Psal. 68. *He that is our God, is the God of Salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death.* But God shall wound the head of his enemies: and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his Trespases. Most terrible also, and yet most certain, is that Sentence pronounced by divine Oracle. Psal. 34. *Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.* But great are the Promises and hopes that the Scripture gives to those who love piety, and are of a penitent and obedient heart, which we should always have before our eyes. *The Lord redeemeth the Soul of his Servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.* Let us then a little consider, what these Men do, who leaving off to  
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bring forth the fruits of Repentance, fall into the unmannerly vices of a corrupt and sinful Generation; and yet, wish, and desire a happy end. They do no less than change Gold, Jewels, and the most precious things, for most sordid and filthy trash, and prefer slavery before Liberty and a Kingdom: They chuse pain and vexation before true pleasure, reject real and lasting honour, for ignominy, dishonour, and contempt, true riches for sordid want, and in a word, truth it self for vanity. What Judgment will God make of men of such Principles? Since all wise Men deservedly reckon them the greatest of fools. Would it not be a better, and far wiser course, more certain of Gods blessing, and more easie and profitable to us, to endeavour  
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and study so to live, as we would expect and desire to die? It was the only answer I always made to those who have often asked me, what was the best way for one to die well, to wit, *To die well, we must live well.* Now they who desire to work out their own Salvation must learn to be wiser by the many instances, which they have heard and seen of those who have died without Repentance. Nay a wise and discreet Reflection on the nature of things, will convince us that there is nothing more worthy a Man, as he is Man, endowed with Reason, and partaker of Heavenly knowledge, than probity, sanctity, and innocence of life; and on the contrary, that filthiness, luxury, pride, covetousness, ambition, and all corruptions of life and

manners, are most unbeseeming his nature: but of all Men Christians ought to be the most convinced of this whom God hath blessed with the knowledg of Heavenly and Earthly matters, and of the true happiness of Mankind, teaching and instructing them by the precepts and rules of his revealed will, so as he hath not done to every Nation, whose Judgments they have not known. - But if this strong and universal reason do not move them, at least they should be so far prevailed upon, as to learn wisdom from the dangers of others, and to consider that the many instances of those who have perished without Repentance belongs to them, whom our God, the Father of all Mercy, warns by such examples, to have a care of

of themselves : for it is written,  
Luke 13. There were present at  
that season, some that told him of  
the Galileans, whose blood Pilate  
had mingled with their Sacrifices.  
And Jesus answering, said unto  
them, suppose ye that these Galile-  
ans were sinners above all the Ga-  
lileans, because they suffered such  
things? I tell you, nay : but except  
ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.  
Or those eighteen, upon whom the  
Tower in Siloam fell, and slew them,  
think ye that they were sinners a-  
bove all Men that dwelt in Jerusa-  
lem? I tell you, nay : but except  
ye repent, ye shall all likewise pe-  
rish.

If we will turn our eyes and  
thoughts to that pattern which  
God hath proposed to be imi-  
tated by all the Faithful, we shall  
plainly understand that Abraham  
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The Example  
of *Abraham*.

after he had left his  
Country, Kindred,  
and Fathers House,  
never returned again into *Chaldea*  
or *Mesopotamia*, but travelled and  
Sojourned in several places, accor-  
ding to the will and appointment  
of God, spending his whole life,  
even to death, in the obedience  
of Gods commands, and that he  
would not die, nor be buried  
any where, but there where he  
had received the Promises: nor  
move a foot from those places,  
wherein he was warned from  
Heaven to tarry and abide.  
Wherefore the Holy Scripture ad-  
monishing those who are the true  
children of *Abraham*, that is, his  
spiritual Children, who is called  
the Father of many Nations, of  
their duty, in imitation of their  
fathers example, saith: *Isa. 51.*  
*Hearken.*



Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your Father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him: as being a Man who firmly believed, and diligently obeyed God that called him, Col. 3. So then they which be of the Faith, (and imitate the example of Abraham) are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Wherefore, my dear fellow Christians, being furnished with all these precepts and instructions of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, let us in the first place, take diligent heed that we sin not. For that indeed is best: but because

cause all the Sons of *Adam* are under sin, the wisest counsel and most acceptable to God, that can be given, in the next place is, that he who hath sinned, would with all his heart and mind turn to God: 1 *John* 2. for we have an advocate with the Father, *Jesus Christ the Righteous*: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. If he be sought of us with a contrite and humble heart: which the Lord himself declares: *To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* Wherefore the Apostle *St. John* admonishes us, saying, 1 *John* 3. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because

because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. St. John expressly affirms, that we shall obtain what we ask of God in order to our Salvation, who will give his good spirit to those that seek him, if our heart condemn us not: which he saith may be proved by this, if we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. Our Lord and Master commands the same: John 14. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive; seeing the Lust, and Pride, the Pomp and Vanity, with all the other Vices of this World are an abomination to him:

2 Tim. 2.

136 *The Practical Rule* Part. I.

*2 Tim. 2. But if a Man purge himself from these, he shall be a Vessel unto Honour, sanctified and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work.*

The sum then of all that hath been said, in short is this, whoever with a pure and holy heart believes the promises of God to his own salvation, let him sincerely renounce the pomps and vanities of this World, and the sinful Lusts and Desires of the Flesh, and make good his profession of Repentance, by a true and earnest forsaking of all sin and vice, and a following after Righteousness, and obedience to the commands of God with a zealous and constant care. Of this care we shall speak hereafter, having first laid down for a certain truth, (which we cannot inculcate too often)

often) that the holy spirit cannot dwell in a heart polluted with the sinful lusts, pleasures, and other corruptions of the flesh, the spirit, I say, of sanctification, by which, who are acted, are the Sons of God. For this is the express sentence of God Almighty himself, which hath been alledged already, and ought often to be cited: *Gen. My spirit shall not always strive with Man, for that he also is Flesh.* that is to say, so long as Man is flesh, and obeys the will and lusts of the flesh, he shall not be partaker of my spirit. And this sentence was pronounced by God, at that time when the Sons of God coming in unto the Daughters of Men, perverted all the rules of Piety and Virtue, and turned Righteousness into Iniquity. Now they who believed the  
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Promises of God made unto *Adam* the common Parent of Mankind, and being endowed with that Faith, exercised themselves in the practice of Piety, are in holy Scripture called the Sons of God: for amongst them was preserved the knowledg of the Redemption and Salvation of Mankind by the holy Seed of the Woman: and they being animated with the Faith and Hope of this promised Salvation, shunned all worldly ambition and corruption, leading a life neither magnificent nor splendid, nor attended with the glory and delights, which Men admire, but low, modest, and mean, living in the sorry habitations of cottages, tents, caves and dens, and were satisfied with sober poverty, in imitation of their common Parents *Adam*

dam and Eve, whom God, having cloathed them with coats made of Beasts skins, commanded to live contented, willing that they who by their own fault had forfeited the sovereignty of the World, should live like strangers and sojourners in it. This example the Sons of God followed. But on the other hand, the Sons of Men, who either believed not the divine Promises, or lived in pomp and splendor, gave themselves over to delights and pleasures, courted glory and worldly greatness; and built to themselves stately Houses, Towns and Castles; being not a little incited to that course of life, by the humour and counsel of Women; by whose blandishments and conversation, the Sons of God also being first allured,  
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and then wholly overcome, *they took to themselves wives of all which they chose*: That is to say, when the Sons of God perceived the delights and pleasures, the pomp and splendor that was amongst Men, which might tempt humane frailty to prefer them before the rigours of an austere frugality; but especially being enticed by the sight of Women, among whom Vanity and Luxury, both in diet and apparel, was most conspicuous, they forsook the hardships of an austere life, continence and poverty, that they might embrace riches, wealth, pleasures and luxury; and making Marriages with the Daughters of Men, they overturned Piety, and perverted the antient discipline of primitive virtue and integrity. Whereupon that divine Sentence

was



was pronounced: *My spirit shall not always strive with Man, for that he also is flesh:* because of the Sons of God, they not only became like unto the Sons of Men, but begat a race much more corrupt than themselves, more licentious in their lives, indulging themselves in all sorts of vice and voluptuousness, and prone to all kind of injustice, barbarity and cruelty, *Gen. 6.* These are the *Giants which were in the Earth in those days;* and also after that, when the Sons of God came in unto the Daughters of Men, and they bare children unto them: the same became mighty Men, which were of old Men of Renown. And God saw that the wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made Man on the Earth. So much did the licentious wickedness of the dissolute life of Men offend God, that holy Oracles assure us, it repented him that he had made Man on the Earth; and that he resolved to destroy all Mankind, these only excepted, who continued in the discipline and duty of the Sons of God, tho they were but very few in number; as it is written; But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, because he was a Just Man; being not only endowed with that Faith of the Sons of God; but through the exercise of true Repentance, and Obedience to the commandments of God, accepted also of the Lord: as one who having spent so many years in building of an Ark,

Ark, and by frequent Sermons forewarning the Men of that age of the imminent wrath of God, endeavoured to persuade them to Repentance and amendment of life, for which he got the title and name of a *Preacher of Righteousness*.

Now, this practice of Repentance which, as we have said, is necessary to all the Disciples and followers of Christ, must be accompanied with an endeavour of amendment of life, and of following after Righteousness and *Honesty*; which, for illustration sake, we shall call by the name of *Obedience*; and define *Obedience* to be an *Obedience.*  
*ordering and framing of all the actions of our life, according to the counsel and will of God.* And this is performed by the knowledg  
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144 *The Practical Rule Part I.*

and diligent practice of the commands of God. For it is not enough to know the precepts and institutions of our Christian discipline, or to talk of, and commend them in quaint and elegant language, unless we also carefully and studiously practise and observe them: This is the express Doctrine of our Lord and Master, *Mat. 7.* Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out Devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity. Therefore, whatsoever bear

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eth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise Man which built his house upon a Rock: and the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House: and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock. We must, therefore, take care that the structure of our salvation be founded upon this Rock of true Obedience, lest that after we have built much and long, some contrary gust beating upon it, it fall to the ground. Now this Obedience is performed in observing the will of our heavenly Father, according to the Doctrine of our Saviour, saying: *He that doeth the will of my Father, who is in Heaven.* And the Father himself hath declared that his will is, that we should know, hold fast, and

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146 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

carefully practise the Doctrine of his dearest Son. *Mat. 17. This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* If then we would desire to know what we are to do for obtaining the salvation which this beloved Son hath brought into the World; let us seriously consult him, who was proposed, and confirmed to us by the Father in presence of most reverend witnesses, two of the Old and three of the New Testament, as the wise and infallible interpreter of his Will; and we shall hear him thus answering and teaching us: *John 15. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love: even as I have kept my Fathers commandments, and abide in his love. John 14. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and*

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be that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self to him: and again, Job. 15. ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. And elsewhere; Mat. 11. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easie, and my burthen is light. By which words we are plainly taught, that the desired rest of our souls cannot be found, but by those who do the Will of the Father. Now, for discovering of this Will, the Father himself referred us to the hearing of his Son: and the Son tells us, that it is his Fathers Will, that they who would find rest to their Souls, should take his yoke upon them, and that his yoke is neither hard nor heavy, but soft and easie,

and that his burden, that is, the sum of the Doctrine of the Law and Commandments, is a light burden. And indeed, the thing it self not only speaks it to be so, but the noble instances also of many, who have submitted to that yoke fully confirm it. For the yoke we speak of, is no more but that sincere and brotherly love, which by another name, is commonly called charity: as our Lord and Master does frequently inculcate. *John 15. This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you. These things I command you that ye love one another.* And he affirms this constant and perpetual precept to be so properly and peculiarly his own, that he would have it to be the badg and mark of his Disciples and followers. *John 13.*





A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another. St. John the great Disciple and Witness of our Lord and Master, again and again confirms this: 1 John 3. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And of how great necessity the keeping of this commandment is, the same Apostle fully demonstrates unto us. 1 John 2. He that hateth his

*brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes. This is so true and plain a Doctrine of Christian Religion, that that famous Expositor of the divine Oracles, made no scruple to prefer this love before all the other virtues, acts and endowments of the mind of Man. I Cor. 13. Though I speak with the tongues of Men and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling Cymbal. And tho I have the gift of prophesie, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and tho I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing. And tho I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have*

have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing. And so far is Charity commended by this Apostle, that he calls it, *Col. 3. the bond of perfectness.*

Now if Charity be so necessary, that without it, the Apostle affirms all things else to be unprofitable to salvation; how far is he from salvation, who not only loves not his brother, but even hates and persecutes him? if he who loves not, banishes from himself the love of God, in what condition is he, and how shall he be esteemed in the eyes of God, that hateth his brother? No less than a Murderer; and according to the sentence of the holy word of God he is guilty of that crime.

*John 3. Whosoever hateth his brother is a Murderer: in thought and affection, which God chiefly takes*

notice of, he is accounted a Murderer, who loveth not his brother; and ye know, saith he, that no Murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. As elsewhere: He that hateth his brother, walketh in darknesse. Wherefore St. James admonisheth Christians, lest being corrupted with this vice, which under some disguise or other uses to creep and steal into mens minds they should make void the name and profession of Religion, and so deceive themselves or others.

*James 3.* But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth, (Calling and boasting yourselves to be Christians) This wisdom descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is  
first

first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisie. We are also plainly and largely taught by our Lord and Master, how grievous a sin the sin of hatred is, and how great an impediment it lays in our way to salvation, not only when it appears outwardly in evil deeds, but even when but conceited inwardly in the heart. *Mat. 5. I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment, and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, (to wit, moved with anger, and with design to hurt him) shall be in danger of hell fire.* Wherefore our Lord and Master in his divine wisdom, that he might shew how  
expe-

expedient it is to be free from that vice and perturbation of mind, plainly tells his Disciples, that he who hath not first satisfied this command of Charity, must not think to obtain the favour of God by any Sacrifice or other Religious performance. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath fought against thee; leave thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. In many other passages he confirms the same, saying. *Luke 6.* Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. Now the charity which our Lord so much commendeth, is not a cold and ordinary,

ordinary, but a burning and fervent charity, ready to do good, whereby he bids us to become like unto God, who makes his Sun to shine upon the good and the bad, and causeth it to rain upon the just, and the unjust. And when our Saviour taught his Disciples to pray, he enlarged more upon the Subject of Charity, Mercy, and Beneficence, than upon any other; as being of all others the chief and most convincing argument of Piety, which by the Apostle also, is called the bond of perfection: seeing all the commands and duties whatsoever of the Law, are easily obeyed and performed by those, who are so quickned by Charity, as not so much to seek their own, as the things of others; according as it is written. . I Cor. 13.

*Charity,*

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not it self; is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Whereas, I John. He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

The summe  
of the rule  
common to  
all Men.

The summe then of all that a Scholar of Christ ought to know, hold, meditate upon, and practise, is briefly comprehended under these three Heads, to wit, the Fear of the Lord, Repentance, and Charity. Now Charity is  
NOT



not here considered only as it relates to God, whom we ought to love above all things, but also as it is to be practised towards Men. 1 John 3. Hereby perceiveth we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this Worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. 1 John 4. Let us love him; because he first loved us. If a Man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath

hath not seen? and this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also. Whoever, therefore shall carefully observe these three heads, will by experience find the mercy, goodness, and clemency of God towards him; the excellency whereof the thought of Man is not able to conceive, and far less his tongue to express. For the gracious God is always ready to fulfill the promises of salvation, which have been made and often confirmed to Believers; as it is written. *Jer. 18. At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: if that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. Ezek. 18.*  
And.

And if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord: and not that he should return from his ways and live? So that the Oracles of God do often confirm the Promises of life and salvation made even to wicked Men who turn from their ways; to those I say, who turning from the evil of their way, and following a course of true Repentance, make it their care and study to obey the commands of God, and to do Judgment and Justice; for whoever  
do

do so, shall live; not by an idle, lasie and unactive Faith, which is also called a dead Faith; but through the righteousness which they have wrought, they shall, indeed, obtain life and salvation, from God the author and fountain of life, which he hath promised to all who believe in him, and obey his word, according to that infinite mercy of his, which the Scripture celebrates in many places. *Psal. 145. The lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. And therefore he bears with the sins of men, that he may bring them to Repentance.*

*Wisdom. 11. For he loveth all the things that are, and abhorreth nothing that he hath made: for never*

ever would he have made any thing, if he had hated it. And therefore it is, that he freely offers and promises his mercy unto all, who with a true heart and purpose of mind desire to be converted, and to return to him, as it is written. Ezek. 33. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn turn ye from your evil way, for why will ye die, O House of Israel? For the Lord is most gracious, and desirous of our salvation, who, when he would have Men to turn to him with their whole heart and mind, and so obtain life, he patiently waits for their Repentance; and this the holy Scriptures clearly testify. Isa. 30. Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be grati-

ous unto you, and therefore will be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you. And the Apostle St. Peter saith: The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise (as some Men count slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Now that the Conversion and true Repentance of sinners, is most acceptable and pleasing to God, his own Son shews us, in that saving Sermon which he made in the three Parables of the prodigal Son, the lost sheep, and goats, whereby he exhorted all Men, that they would endeavour by their conversion to please God, and cause joy in the whole Court of Heaven, that so they might tast of the wonderful goodness of God, who is rich in mercy towards all

all that call upon him with a pure and single heart, and upon whom, if they approve themselves by Faith, and the practice of true Repentance and Obedience, he bestows great mercies, and the spirit of sanctification with all his gifts and graces, which St. Peter affirms was given to all that obey him, and our Saviour promised to be given, saying: *John 14. If ye love me, keep my commandments, And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.* Now in the sense of St. John, the world are they who live according to the *lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life*; that is, who are slaves to lust, delights, pleasures, or ambition:

164 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

tion: for those shall not feel the power and virtue of that holy spirit abiding in them: as the Lord himself pronounces; *Gen. 6. My spirit shall not always strive with Man, for that he also is flesh.* With Man who is flesh, and striveth not to mortifie the deeds of the Flesh, as the Apostle saith: *if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live: to wit, through the spirit of God given and communicated unto you; for so it is written. Isa. 66. Thus saith the Lord, the Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? for all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this Man will I look, even to*



him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. Those divine gifts and graces whereby Men upon Earth are changed into other creatures, and become almost celestial, avoiding the corruption that is in the World through lust, and having their conversation in heaven; examples and instances of these gifts, I say, which were very frequent of old, are now rare to be found on the Earth: because we have neither that strong and lively faith in the Promises of God, nor purely and sincerely obey his Precepts; neither are we filled with the holy fear of the Lord; but by a double and deceitful heart, wicked and perverse thoughts and actions, we are wanting to our selves, and to the grace and goodness of God:

of

of God, I say, *who trieth the heart and searcheth the reins*, and sees us wholly given over to impure thoughts, the delights and pleasures of the flesh, and to pride and ambition, like adulterous Women dealing treacherously against their lawful husbands; which kind of hearts estranged from, or divided in their chief love, he neither loves nor approves of. The mind must be pure and single, and fervent in love, that aspires to the heavenly marriage of this bridegroom and would have it confirmed and made good to it. The wise Son of *Sirach* advises us to endeavour that as much as we can, when he saith. *Ecclus 1. 2. Distrust not the fear of the Lord: and come not unto him with a double heart. We be to fearful hearts, and faint hands,*  
and

*and the sinner that goeth two ways.*

And the word of God by the mouth of his holy Prophets, does also in many places expressly admonish us, heartily to renounce the vanities, sins and pollutions of this World, and make it our whole care to forsake them. Jer. 4.

*O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodg within thee?*

Whosoever come so provided to seek the Lord, shall certainly find him to be loving, gracious and bountiful.

Jer. 29. *Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart; and I will be found of you, saith the Lord: whose blessed Son hath also said:*

Mat. 5. *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. God is to be seen by the pure in heart,*  
saith

saith our Saviour; He is to be  
 seen dwelling in them, whom he  
 consecrates for a holy Temple to  
 himself; as it is written. *Ise. 57.*  
*For thus saith the high and lofty one*  
*that inhabiteth eternity, whose name*  
*is holy, I dwell in the high and holy*  
*place; with him also that is of a con-*  
*trite and humble spirit, to revive*  
*the spirit of the humble, and to re-*  
*vive the heart of the contrite one.*  
*Psal. 147.* He healeth the broken  
 in heart and bindeth up their  
 wounds. This contrition of heart,  
 so acceptable unto God, and so  
 much commended in Scripture,  
 both not dwell nor abide with  
 the anxious desire of worldly  
 things, and of the pomp and glo-  
 ry of the age, which are hateful  
 to the Lord. Nor let any Man  
 perswade himself that he can serve  
 two Masters, that is, that he can  
 please

please God, and at the same time fulfil the lusts of the flesh, pursue the vanities, pride and ambition of the World, and obey the dictates of carnal wisdom: The Apostle St. James declares it to be impossible. *Jam. 4. Ye adulterers and Adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the World is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the World, is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? And therefore we are earnestly warned by the Apostle St. John, that being deluded by vain arguments, or any idle and groundless hope and opinion, we should not retain the love of this World, but wholly reject it, if we would approve our selves to God, whom we ought to love:*

I for

170 *The Practical Rule Part I.*

for our own salvation. *John 2.*  
*Love not the World, neither the*  
*things that are in the World. If a-*  
*ny Man love the World, the love of*  
*the Father is not in him, for all*  
*that is in the world, the lust of the*  
*flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and*  
*the pride of life, is not of the Fa-*  
*ther, but is of the world. And the*  
*world passeth away and the lusts*  
*thereof: but he that doeth the will*  
*of God abideth for ever. From all*  
*which divine sentences we may*  
*conclude, that they who have not*  
*carefully avoided the corruption*  
*and pollution of life and man-*  
*ners, and have not laboured to*  
*shun those things, that are*  
*to be shunned, will, with all their*  
*actions, works and oblations be*  
*displeasing and so enemies to the*  
*pure and holy spirit of God. Di-*  
*vine wisdom it self asserts this, and*  
*therefore*

therefore advises us not to lose the fruit of our good works, through our own fault and negligence. *Prov. 15. The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord; Eccles. 34. He that sacrificeth a thing wrongfully gotten, his Offering is ridiculous; and the gifts of unjust Men are not accepted. The most high is not pleased with the Offerings of the wicked; neither is he pacified for sin, by the multitude of sacrifices.* The Prophet expostulates the same thing, with those who by their perverse actions and deeds, both publick and private, polluted the sacrifices which they frequented. *Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me, the new Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new*  

I 2                      Moons,

Moons, and your appointed Feasts my  
 soul hateth: they are a trouble unto  
 me, I am weary to bear them. And  
 when ye spread forth your hands,  
 I will hide mine eyes from you:  
 yea, when ye make many prayers, I  
 will not hear: your hands are full  
 of blood. Wash ye, make you clean,  
 put away the evil of your doings  
 from before mine eyes, cease to do  
 evil, learn to do well, seek Judg-  
 ment, relieve the oppressed, judge  
 the Fatherless, plead for the Wi-  
 dow. Come now and let us reason  
 together, saith the Lord; tho your  
 sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as  
 white as Snow; tho they be red like  
 crimson, they shall be as wooll. If  
 ye be willing and obedient, ye shall  
 eat the good of the Land: but if ye  
 refuse and rebell, ye shall be devour-  
 ed with the Sword: for the mouth  
 of the Lord hath spoken it. This  
 divine



divine exhortation is made up both of promises and threatenings to those who either doe, or will not obey: wherefore by the same spirit the author of this exhortation, we are invited and stirred up, by strong and often repeated reasons, to seek to God for mercy and the accomplishment of his promises. *Isay. 55. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Seeing therefore it hath been made out unto us by many clear and manifest testimonies and Texts of both the Old and New Testament, that these three heads, to wit, the fear of the Lord, Repentance and brotherly Charity, as the pure fountains and sources

274 *The Practical Rule* Part I.

ees of all pious actions accompanied with Faith, are most acceptable to God, and through his gracious favour very instrumental, not only to make us escape the wrath and indignation of God, but also find grace and mercy in time of need; and are so necessary to salvation, that without them we cannot please God, nor obtain the accomplishment of his promises concerning our immortal state and the celestial inheritance purchased to us by the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And seeing by the Covenant of Grace all Believers are assured, that through the diligent study and practice of these three points, every one may attain their share of that Promise and Obligation, which God him-

self

self hath graciously and freely proposed to us for our salvation; I thought it my duty, being moved with Christian zeal, and fervent Charity, to admonish and exhort all my fellow Christians, not only by what we have hitherto alledged, but by all the oracles, sentences, precepts, admonitions and exhortations uttered by the holy Spirit, and laid up in the Treasury of sacred Record, that they would carefully set about the duties of Piety, and diligently prosecute the same, in the constant practice of these three principal Points, the Fear of the Lord, Repentance and Charity. *For no Man putting his hand to the Plough and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* Now that these things

may be religiously and rightly performed, we must put off all the carnal affections and lusts that war against the Soul; these, I say, which resist divine grace, and retard and keep back the effects of that love, whereby *Job. 3. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. 2 Tim. 2. If a Man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work: And being enriched with the blessings of divine Grace, he shall even in this life begin, to tast and see that the Lord is good to those that love and fear him. That we may therefore briefly summ up all that hath been said of this rule of Christian*

Christian Piety, which hath been confirmed by the word of God, delivered in the oracles of the Prophets, and asserted in the sentences of the Apostles, and all Holy Writ; we affirm that these three heads of Religion are not only of principal use, but even absolutely necessary to all ranks and conditions of Christians, for obtaining the salvation of their souls, and the inheritance and possession of the Kingdom of Heaven; and that this is a rule common to all Men, who would live according to the Doctrine, Precepts, and Instructions of our Lord. Now these Heads, which we have often mentioned, are the *Fear of the Lord*, *Repentance* and *Charity*, or Brotherly love; which all of us who profess the Doctrine of the Christian Religion, must

not only know, but also carefully practise, through the assistance of the divine grace, which, as we have already shew'd, will be denied to none that rightly seek it, as our Lord and Master himself does plainly assure us: *Luke 11.* I say, unto you, ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a Son shall ask bread of any of you that is a Father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a Fish, will he for a Fish give him a Serpent? or if he shall ask an Egg, will he offer him a Scorpion? if ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?

We

We also testifie,  
and from the read-  
ing and observation

*The Use and Pra-  
ctices of this Rule.*

of the holy Scriptures, do affirm  
and declare, that the corruption,  
depravation and malignity of life  
and manners, which is to be  
found amongst Men of all condi-  
tions, proceed from the neglect  
of these three Parts of Christian  
discipline, which are as certain  
first Principles of practical Piety,  
known to all Men who are in  
their right senses. And the ne-  
cessity of these three Principles,  
to wit, of the *Fear of the Lord*,  
*Repentance* and *Brotherly-love*, is  
manifest not only to all Christi-  
ans, by the light and revealed  
will of God preached unto them,  
but also to the unlearned and  
those who know not the written  
Law, by the similitude and image  
of

180 *The Practical Rule* Part. I.

of the Deity stamped on their minds: tho, as we have said, they be not proved and confirmed to them by so many sentences and oracles of holy Scripture: which, perhaps, is their own fault, seeing they mind nothing less than the serious learning of those things which make for their own salvation, and whilst they heedlessly and negligently run over these, diligently study to know and practise the contrary. But though they have not at all learn'd, or neglect to be taught the Law, *Rom. 2.* Yet *they are a Law to themselves; which shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.* Now if these three heads of a Christian life, were well known and



and carefully practised by all; we should experience another kind of efficacy of the grace of God in us, find another cheerfulness of mind, and other evidences of Faith also. Other proofs of our Religion would appear both in publick and private, nor would there so many detestable instances of vice and impiety so openly abound, in City and in Country, in Courts and private Families, and in all the societies of Christians, where monstrous and flagitious wickedness doth but too much and too often reign; and the divine Laws are despised and violated, by bloody contentions, enmity, hatred, strife, calumnies, fraud, deceit, bitter and frequent quarrels, robberies, thefts, extorsions, and defrauding of the poor, besides the innumerable  
arts

arts of violence and oppression, whoredom and uncleanness, adultery, fornication, incest, and many other heinous abominations not to be named. So many places of the Christian World would not abound in surfeiting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, sinful and sensual delights and pleasures, and corrupt luxury; nor would there be so much vanity and ostentation, so immoderate and useless expensiveness, so great emulation and pride, nor so vast a number of other sins, and monstrous wickednesses and impieties, as to woful experience we daily see. But on the contrary, if the fear of the Lord, accompanied with Repentance and Charity dwelt in the hearts of all Christians, the actions of their lives would be ordered aright.

right. It would then be the  
 chiefest care of every one first to  
 stand in awe and fear, lest they fall  
 into the hands of the living God :  
 and next that they may obtain  
 forgiveness and mercy from him ;  
 and so every one would endea-  
 vour to perform what they pro-  
 mised in the holy Sacrament  
 of Baptism, having entred into  
 Covenant, before a mortal Man,  
 indeed, yet with the immortal  
 God, the Just Judg. of all the  
 World, the Lord of Hosts, and  
 the avenger of all sin and wick-  
 edness ; *Psal. 5. Who is a God  
 that hath not pleasure in wickedness,  
 neither shall evil dwell with him.  
 The foolish shall not stand in his  
 sight ; he hateth all workers of ini-  
 quity. He shall destroy them that  
 speak leasing : the Lord will abhor  
 the bloody and deceitful Man : The*  
 summ

summ of which promise was, To renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked World, and to lead his life according to the Laws of him whose Son he would be accounted; and every one being endowed with divine fear, incited by the desire of amending his life by Repentance, and inflamed with Brotherly love and Charity, would direct all his works and actions to the advancement, not only of private and particular, but also of common and publick Peace, Faith, Justice, Righteousness, Mercy, Honesty, and, in a word, of the general virtue and sanctity of all Men: and carefully perform the duties incumbent upon him, that he may receive his reward from him who cannot lie.

Of

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Of the several Duties and Offices of all ranks and conditions of Men, to be examined according to this Rule.

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*The Second Part.*

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**N**OW if these three heads of pure Religion and undefiled before God the Father, were observed by all Men, we should see many lively instances and effects of that practice; whereof the sum is, *James I. To visit the Fatherless*

*Fatherless and Widows, and to keep himself unspotted from the World;* And from these fountains of all humane actions, that is the Fear of the Lord, the study of Repentance, and exercise of Charity, the offices and duties of all degrees, ranks and conditions of Men, might easily be drawn and deduced: so that the whole body of the Christian Commonwealth, from the crown of the head to the sole<sup>2</sup> of the foot, would be more healthful and sound, than at present we see, and would in all its Members worthily perform its several functions: There would be no trouble nor discord amongst the various degrees of Men; but all would conspire for the mutual good and profit one of another: For the variety of degrees, or-

den

ders, Ministeries and Offices, is not to be condemned, but rather approved of and commended amongst a Christian People, as being found to be of great use and advantage, when they are instituted and executed according to the Laws and Precepts of God. for as St. Paul tells us; 1 Cor. II. The body is not one Member, but many. If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? and if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? if the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the Members, every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And a little after he subjoyns: That

# 188 The Practical Rule Part II.

That there should be no Schism in the body; but that the Members should have the same care one for another. And whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it: or one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoyce with it. Now ye are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular. When the several Members are once perswaded of this, and in the fear of the Lord, in the study of Repentance and practice of Brotherly love and Charity, they know their Duties and Offices, there is no doubt but that they will religiously set about the performance of the same. That we may then begin with the first and chief orders of the Christian state; it is manifest, that it is the duty of Rulers and Governours, and of those who are

to

*The Duty of Pastors, Rulers and Governours.*



to guide and direct others, to take care to maintain the honour of God, and to provide what is necessary as well for the salvation of the souls, as for the honest and lawful concerns of the bodies of Christian People, and faithfully and diligently to discharge their part of the Office and Care, that they have severally taken upon them: not to give themselves over to sloth and idleness, to luxury, delights and pleasures: but by day and by night, though with hunger and thirst, colds and heats, losses and crosses, perils and dangers both of life and fortune; to behave themselves as becomes good, faithful and approved Ministers and Servants, and as that honest Keeper of another Mans Cattel, affirmed of himself in relation to the Flocks  
com-

190 The Practical Rule Part II.

committed to his care. Gen. 30.  
 This twenty years have I been with  
 thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats  
 have not cast their young, and the  
 rams of thy flock have I not eaten.  
 That which was torn of Beasts, I  
 brought not unto thee, I bare the  
 loss of it; of my hand didst thou  
 require it, whether stoln by day,  
 or stoln by night. Thus I was, in  
 the day the drought consumed me,  
 and the frost by night; and my sleep  
 departed from mine eyes. And as  
 that excellent shepherd did, whose  
 task was neither more easie nor  
 less dangerous, as he himself in-  
 timates. 1 Sam. 17. Thy Servant  
 kept his Fathers Sheep, and there  
 came a Lion, and a Bear, and took  
 a Lamb out of the Flock: and I  
 went out after him, and smote him,  
 and delivered it out of his mouth:  
 and when he arose against me, I  
 caught

caught him by his beard, and smote him and slew him. Since these holy Shepherds, then, shewed so much care and diligence, so much faithfulness and assiduity, for sheep, goats, and brute beasts, that their owners might suffer no loss, what care then, behoveth it them to take, *Psal. 78.* who feed Jacob the People of the Lord, and Israel his Inheritance? that they may feed them according to the integrity of their heart: and guide them by the skilfulness of their hands: whom they know to be the Flocks not of an earthly and mortal, but of an eternal and immortal Lord and Master, *1 Pet. 1.* Not redeem'd with corruptible things as Silver and Gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. Now they must be led out and fed

fed not in strange Pastures, but in the Meadows and Fields of the Lord; as it was the care of Jesus Christ himself, who enjoined the same to the Pastors, who lawfully discharge that duty, not once or twice, but a third time, saying: *John 21. Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?* to which when he had answered, *yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee:* he saith unto him, *feed my Lambs.* He saith unto him again, *Simon Son of Jonas lovest thou me?* and he answering; *yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee,* he saith unto him, *feed my Sheep.* And he said unto him a third time, *Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* and when he had answered the third time: *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee:* he saith unto him: *but now thou shalt feed*

feed my Sheep : This care which Jesus Christ so earnestly and affectionately commended to Pastors, the Ancients Religiously undertook, and gloried in the performance and discharge of the same; as particularly St. Paul: 2 Cor.

II. In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft, of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered Ship-wreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep: In Journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils by mine own country-men, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often,

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194 *The Practical Rule Part II.*

*in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? The Apostle was not only satisfied that he had suffered these things for the sake of the souls committed to his charge, but also, as we have already observed, gloried and greatly rejoiced that by undergoing such troubles and care he might approve himself unto God; wherefore he subjoyned, 2 Cor. 12. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in Reproaches; in Necessities, in Persecutions, in Distresses for Christs sake. Of the like mind were the other holy Ministers of the Gospel also, Acts 5. who departed from the presence*

sence of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the Temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. Such endeavours, and such instances of duty and faithful obedience God always expects of his Pastors and Ministers, and when they are needful requires them. Now when are they not needful? what time is there, that affords not occasion and opportunity for a strenuous discharge of the Ministry? what reason, colour or pretext can be given for idleness, and neglecting of the Sheep? what if there be no dangers, but all things in peace and quietness? yet opportunities and seasons of doing those things which concern the salvation of Souls are never wanting:

there is always occasion for procuring and encreasing the favour and love of God, and for avoiding such a complaint and reproof as this. Ezek. 34. *Wo be to the Shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves: should not the Shepherds feed the Flocks? ye eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the wooll, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the Flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no Shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.* My Sheep wandred



wandred through all the Mountains,  
and upon every high hill: yea, my  
Flock was scattered upon all the  
face of the Earth, and none did  
search or seek after them. There-  
fore ye Shepherds hear the word of  
the Lord; as I live saith the Lord  
God, surely because my Flock  
became a prey, and my Flock be-  
came meat to every beast of the  
field, because there was no Shepherd;  
neither did my Shepherds search for  
my Flock, but the Shepherds fed  
themselves and not my Flock:  
Therefore, O ye Shepherds, hear the  
word of the Lord; Thus saith the  
Lord God, behold I am against the  
Shepherds, and I will require my  
Flock at their hand, &c. Conso-  
nant to these complaints and  
dreadful threatnings of the Lord  
God, are the rebukes given by  
our Saviour to the Lazy, Ambi-

198 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

rious, Covetous and negligent Ministers and Pastors of his Flock. *Luke 11. Wo unto you, ye Lawyers; for ye lade Men with burdens grievous to be born, and ye your selves touch not the burden with one of your fingers. Wo unto you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited Sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead Mens bones, and of all uncleanness.* Those Pastors and Ministers who dread such reproofs and threatnings of the Holy Ghost, will forsake other affairs which concern not, but rather obstruct their function, and with all diligence and pains, will set about the discharge of that duty which has been committed to them from above: Nor will they think it enough to entrust

trust others with the Govern-  
ment of their Churches, who se-  
riously mind their profit, but  
slightly their duty, or others, by  
whom Children are only taught  
to say a few Prayers by heart,  
whilst by age they are unable to  
do or understand any thing else :  
Nay, rather, themselves being  
neither tired out by labour, fright-  
ned by dangers, nor discouraged  
by difficulties, will never leave  
off to watch over, visit, and take  
account of the Flock of God,  
and to take care of, and instruct  
Christians of all ages, ranks, and  
conditions in the necessary duties  
of true and solid Piety. This, in-  
deed, is a heavy charge, and not  
to be performed without much  
labour and pain; but it is like-  
wise most acceptable to the Lord  
and Master of the Flock, who

laid down his life for his sheep: and will never withdraw the help and assistance which he hath promised, to those who study to discharge aright the office of their Ministry. *And loe, said he, I am with you to the end of the World.*

Now it behoves every one, with a Religious awe and fear to take heed and look to himself, that by Ambition, Avarice, Bribes, Interest or other arts he aspire not to that noble Ministry, nor be found so doing by that Just Judge from whom the secrets of the heart and actions of Men are not hidden, and who allows no Man for his own ends, by his own arts and industry, and without a lawful Call and Election, to canvass for, or step into that holy function, nor to undertake the duties of  
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the same, unless he be endowed with those virtues and qualities; which are set down and expressly described by the Holy Ghost: for, Tit. 1. *A Bishop must be blameless, as the Steward of God; not self-will'd, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, nor given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good Men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.* Happy is that Flock that has a Pastor so endowed and qualified, then would there be fewer diseases, less slothful idleness and fewer scabs and putrifying sores to be seen amongst the Sheep; so much error, ignorance, delusion and superstition would not be found amongst them. In a word,

Non

*Non insueta graves tentabunt  
pabula fœtas,  
Nec mala vicini pecoris conta-  
gia ledent.*

No novell food their teeming  
Flocks would cloy,  
Nor no contagious neighbour-  
ing ills annoy.

But on the contrary, at what  
time the sovereign Lord, should  
come to visit the Flock which he  
hath committed to the care of  
good Shepherds ; he would find  
it pure and clean, free from all  
impious and false doctrines, with-  
out error, nurtured and bred up  
in sound Discipline and solid In-  
stitution, healthy and plump,  
comely and beautiful, as being  
fed with the sound food of pure  
and

and heavenly Doctrine: which will not only be most acceptable to their Lord and Master, but will also procure to the Pastors a most certain and excellent reward. And what, and how great that may be hoped to be, the chief of the Apostles St. Peter, declares to his fellow-labourers in the Gospel. 1 Pet. 5. *The Elders which are among you I exhort; who am also an Elder; and a witness of the Sufferings of Christ; and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the Flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof; not by constraint; but wilfully; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over Gods heritage, but being ensamples to the Flock: and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* And.

204 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

*The Duty of  
inferiour Mi-  
nisters.*

And we make no doubt but that if the three Heads which have been already proposed, be carefully observed in the lives and manners of inferiour Ministers, Priests and Deacons, and all that serve at the Altar; it will be a most profitable and sure way to procure the grace and favour of God, not only to themselves, but to all those also, who war under their conduct in the Church of Christ: for where the fear of the Lord, the study of Repentance and the fervent virtue of brotherly love and Charity dwell abundantly; there, neither Pride nor Ambition, neither Hatred nor Injustice, neither Backbiting, Vanity, Pomp nor Ostentation, nor any of those vices, which are wont to war against



gainst the foul, and the honesty and integrity of life, have any place: but rather Honesty. Industry, Justice, Peace, Concord, Mildness, Mercifulness, Continence, Civility, Gravity, and all the other Virtues which accompany these, and spring from those three Heads, as from pure Fountains of Christian Piety, will be eminent and conspicuous. Superiours will Rule, Govern and Correct their Inferiours, with paternal love and affection. Inferiours will submit unto, obey and love their superiours, as the Vicegerents and Vicars of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, the Lord, Master, and Head of his Church. And both will retain in their minds, and practise in their lives, what is enjoyned by our Saviour.

*Luke 22. The Kings of the Gentiles*

226 *The Practical Rule* Part II:

*titles exercise Lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serue.*

Now in all that we have already said, or shall hereafter say, it is not our intention to observe what the practice of all and every one is, but only to admonish and declare what they ought to do, as we premised in the beginning of this Treatise. For it hath always been our design and constant purpose, not to give offence to any Man living, but only to propose to all what Christ our Supreme Lord and heavenly Master requires of us and of all that would be his Disciples and Followers.

And

And therefore, that we may prosecute the Offices of the several ranks and qualities of Christians, as we have proposed in the beginning; how useful and advantageous the three chief Heads of our Christian Rule, to wit, the *Fear of the Lord, Repentance and Brotherly Love*, are to Kings, Princes and Magistrates, *The Duties of Kings, Princes and Magistrates.* for ordering and carrying on their affairs with Prudence, Wisdom, Dexterity and Success, and thereby for the working out of their own Salvation; the very Offices and Charges which they bear, do declare. For such Ministers are appointed by God; not that they should only consult their own interests, and indulge and please their own humours, but that they should with all

all care and industry provide for the people of God those things that are known to conduce to the promoting of true Christian Piety, publick honesty, peace and tranquillity, innocence and uprightness, according to the Precepts and directions of the divine wisdom. Now they who endeavour and study to do so, must shew themselves to be Princes indeed: not slaves to pride, ambition, strife, hatred, deceit, frauds and avarice; not approving, desiring, or admitting any thing that is not good; just and honest; not imitating crafty arts, the slyness of dissimulation and humane cunning: nor out of private revenge, or for fulfilling their own lusts, or ambitious desires, being the authors of the devastations, plundrings and ruine of Coun-

Countrys, Cities, Towns and Villages: nor vexing and oppressing poor Christian People with heavy and insupportable Taxes and Impositions: but proposing themselves as patterns and examples to other Men, of publick equity, innocence and righteousness; and making their lives and conversations a rule to private Men, of continence, modesty and godliness; reckoning themselves, no less than other Christians, bound and obliged by that Covenant which they entered into in their Baptism, and diligently observing that necessary renunciation which they then made of the Devil and all his works. If these things were rightly observed, one Prince would not invade the Kingdoms, Cities, Towns and Rights of other Christians, nor detain what  
he

he had unjustly usurped. By this means, mutual Charity and Peace would keep, not only Princes themselves, but also their Vassals and Subjects in their duty; honesty would commend, and Majesty and Authority adorn them; Justice would reign amongst People; the zeal of Gods honour every where appear, in exact obedience to the precepts and holy commandments of God: and lastly, in common and united desires, purposes, words and works, that promise would be fulfilled, which was made by all Christians, none excepted, in Baptism. For if the true nature of Regal, Imperial, and Princely Authority be considered, it will manifestly appear; that these high and supreme dignities, have for that end been instituted by God, that they who  
are

are honoured with them, should be the Guardians, asserters and avengers of the holy Laws of God, be, and have the title of the fathers of their People; that they should rightly administer Justice, punish the guilty and transgressors of the Law, put to death open and incorrigible Malefactors, protect the poor and weak from the violence and oppression of the powerful and rich, defend the innocent against the attempts of the wicked, and maintain the fatherless and widows: In a word, that they should endeavour what in them lyes, to keep and preserve all the Members of the State, both high and low, great and small, rich and poor, in peace, concord, tranquillity and security. This, I say, is the true end, for which the dignity and authority

rity of Kings, Princes and chief Magistrates is appointed by God, from whence it follows, that needless Pomp and ostentation with voluptuous greatness, the affectation of Arbitrary dominion, the designs of boundless ambition, and the consequents thereof the dangers and losses of souls, bodies and estates, and the excessive harassing and overcharging Subjects, are both displeasing to God, and grievous to the people.

Nor is it only the Office of Kings and Princes, to cause the rest of Mankind to be instructed and kept in the duties of Religion, Piety, Honesty, and in the fear of God, and to shew themselves the Ministers of the Will of God and Ecclesiastical Discipline, but it is their proper duty also as they



they are Princes, To know the Law of God, carefully attend to, and diligently practise and obey the same, being led by the fear of the Lord, in all the actions of their lives and administrations of their Government. As it is enjoined by this singular Precept: *Dent. 17.* It shall be when the King sitteth upon the Throne of his Kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this Law in a Book, out of that which is before the Priests and the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this Law and these Statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left: neither shall he multiply

214 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

*multiply Wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself Silver and Gold; lest trusting therein, he fall into avarice and covetousness, which the Apostle calls Idolatry, and the root of all evil. They are not to respect persons in Judgment, nor to take bribes; Eccles. 20. For Presents and Gifts blind the eyes of the Wise, and make them liable to that dreadful Sentence pronounced against those that pervert Judgment: Dent. 27. Cursed be he that perverteth the Judgment of the Stranger, Fatherless and Widow. Of which execrable practice, these Judges and Magistrates are taxed, of whom it is written: 1 Sam. 8. They turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted Judgment.*

But

But seeing it is impossible that so many Provinces, Cities and Towns as may happen to be in one Christian Kingdom, can be Governed by the pains and care of the Prince alone; divine Providence has appointed that Judges, Magistrates and other publick Ministers should be constituted, who may carefully and dutifully discharge the Offices and Trust that is reposed upon them. Dent.

*The Duty of  
inferiour  
Magistrates*

16. As it is written, Judges and Officers shalt thou make thee in all thy Gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee throughout all thy Tribes: and they shall Judge the People with just Judgment. Thou shalt not wrest Judgment, thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the Wise, and pervert the words

216 The Practical Rule Part II.

words of the Righteous. That which is altogether Just shalt thou follow. And in another place. Exod. 18. Provide out of all the People, able Men, such as fear God, Men of Truth, bating Covetousness; and place such over them, to be Rulers of Thousands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Rulers of Fifties, and Rulers of Tens. And let them Judge the People at all Seasons, &c. Which kind of Men when Jephthah had chosen, he thus admonished them: 2 Chron. 19. Take heed what ye do: for ye Judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in Judgment. Wherefore, now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of Persons, nor taking of Gifts. Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully,

fully, and with a perfect heart. And that this course was followed by Princes and Magistrates who were approved of God, Holy History assures us.

Now so much holier ought Christian Princes and Magistrates to be, so much more versed in the study and knowledge of Law and Equity, by how much they have obtained a more perfect Testament than the Ancients did, not only because of the clear and plain exposition of the divine Precepts made by Christ and his Apostles, but also because of more abundant grace promised and prepared for Believers under the Gospel. It is very far from their duty then, either by commission or omission to break the Law, and violate the sacred Precepts; and that they who are

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commanded always to read and meditate on the Law, and not to turn aside from the right, neither to the right hand nor to the left; should mind nothing but pleasures, pomp, ambition and avarice, and go astray after their own inventions, making and imposing Laws upon others, which make more for the appetites and desires, the greatness, State, Majesty and Glory, (as they are pleased to call it) of the Governors; and for establishing many new titles of Authority, Prerogative and Superiority, which they daily invent, than for the true Worship of God, and good of the People. Besides, it is a sort of perverseness most odious to God, for Princes, or inferior Magistrates, to covet to be rich, and to leave great Estates to their  
Chil-

Children, out of the publick Revenues: and not being satisfi- ed with an honest reward for their labours, that is, with a modest competency of subsistence, according to their quality, to be insatiably set upon the getting of wealth and riches, either by the liberality of Princes, or defraud- ing the Publick, and to make it the whole desire of their Souls, that they may raise great Houses and Families, whereby they may perpetuate their Names upon Earth, rather by a long Successi- on of Heirs, than by the Monu- ments and Examples of Virtue, Innocence, Sanctity and real Ho- nour.

*Samuel* born in *Ramah*, a little Town, and in a Mountainous Country, being from his child- hood brought up in the sacred

Ministeries of the Temple, had a garment given him yearly by his Parents, suitable to the meanness of their Fortune. When he was grown up to be a Man, by the command of God he took upon him the Government of the Commonwealth, and during the space of forty years, as Prince, Judge, and Ruler, in Peace and in War, Ruled the populous, rich, and flourishing State of the whole twelve Tribes of *Israel*, being as painful and assiduous, as vigilant and active as any Governor, either before or since; and yet during that whole time, he neither encreased his Estate, nor changed his abode from his own mean native habitation, to a more conspicuous City, at least in his own Tribe; nor for his pleasure made use of the delights and varieties that



that other places did afford : but having in War recovered and re-established the State of the Israelites, and settled a firm Peace all over the Country, he kept Assemblies at certain times for administering Justice to the People, and when he had done so, that he might not be troublesome or chargeable to any Town or Family, he returned home to his own mean, but contentful habitation, where he neither excused himself from business, nor omitted any opportunity of promoting the worship of God. As it is written, *1 Sam. 7. And the band of the Lord was against the Philistines, all the days of Samuel. And the Cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath, and the Coasts thereof.*

did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistins: And there was Peace between Israel and the Amorites. And Samuel Judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in Circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and Judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house: and there he Judged Israel, and there he built an Altar unto the Lord. By the short description of this instance, the Holy Ghost manifestly shews us, with how much care, diligence, innocence, piety, continence and abstinence, that great Man discharged the Offices of a valiant and expert General in War, and of an excellent Prince and Magistrate in Peace, who, when afterward he had dimitted the Government, and  
resigned

resigned up the Authority to a chosen King, was neither richer nor more wealthy, nor was his Family advanced to greater dignity or splendor; but he contentedly returned to the same state wherein he was born. For Samuel went to Ramah, where he spent the rest of his days; neither did he build Palaces or stately Houses, either in Ramah, or in any other more conspicuous place, nor erected for himself a magnificent Monument or burying place, on which, either at Jerusalem, or any other City taken in War, he might transmit to Posterity the Trophies of his Achievements, or the Titles of his Fame. 1 Sam. 25. But Samuel died, and all the Israelites were gathered together and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah.

224 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

For they who aim to be rich by their Magistracy, must of necessity either cheat the King, or defraud the Publick; and apply that to their own private use which might far better and more profitably be expended on the Publick: Now the publick treasure being exhausted, the people must needs be harassed with new Taxes and Impositions; and so the Wealth and Riches of a few, must cause the want and poverty of many. But how much God is offended at these covetous desires, the Prophet plainly declares, *Isa. 5. Wo unto them that joyn house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth. In mine ears, said the Lord of Hosts, of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair,*

*fair, without Inhabitant.* Now if it be unbecoming a Christian Magistrate to heap up riches from the Salaries or larger Perquisites of their Offices; how detestable and accursed must it be in the sight of God, to get Estates and Dignities, by accepting of Persons, Injustice, Rapine, Fraud, Bribes, Oppression, Calumny and Cheating? God forbids Kings, Princes, and Magistrates, to multiply to themselves Gold and Silver: for the greedy thirst after Gold and Riches, sets the minds of those who are infected therewith, upon the committing of any Sin and Wickedness: it is the cause of the Oppression of People with grievous and heavy Impositions, of Quarrels, Strife and Wars amongst Princes themselves, of the slaughter and murdering  
of.

of Subjects, and other abominable and flagitious cruelties, that are committed by Soldiers; and, in a word, of the ruine and loss of many Souls, as the Holy Ghost himself assures us: *Jam. 4.* *From whence come Wars and Fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Lusts that War in your Members? ye lust and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, and ye have not, because ye ask not: ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your Lusts.* And whilst matters go thus amongst those who profess the Faith, and pretend to Piety and Religion: the Christian Commonwealth and true Piety are lessened and impaired; the barbarous and wicked Empires and  
King-

Kingdoms of Christs enemies; encrease and are enlarged, Heresies and erroneous and accursed Sects, spring up and daily grow greater and greater. God set before us an illustrious and noble pattern of Chastity and Continence, in the persons of his own Princes: saying, He shall not multiply to himself many Wives, that may allure his mind. That was not lawful to the ancient Kings of the people of *Israel*: and shall it therefore be lawful to Christian Princes, to deflower Virgins, rob Women of their Honour and Reputation, and by their foul example tempt others to the desire or act of the same filthiness, till they know no more the number of them they have debauched and wronged? Kings and Princes who would approve themselves

228 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

to God, are forbidden in Scripture to lift up their hearts in Pride above their brethren. It would be horrid wickedness then, to use Tyranny, Inhumanity, Pride, Ambition, Haughtiness, Arrogance, Insolency and Cruelty towards Christian Subjects; and so to treat them, as if they were Heathen Slaves bought with their Money, for the satisfaction of their Lusts and Pleasures, their Luxury, Vanity and Pride. God forbids any Man to aspire to Power and Supremacy, to arrogate it to himself or any way to invade it; he will not have any Man to be the Lord and Master of his People, except those who are appointed by his Favour and Authority, or are declared to be such by the just Right of Inheritance. And therefore we dare be  
bold



beld to affirm, that it is not Law-ful for any Man that professes himself to be a Disciple of Christ, and fears the Judgment of God, either by Favour, Interest or popular Faction, or by Force, Fraud or Deceit, by Money, Gifts or Promises, to invade the Rights and Places of others, or to detain them being unjustly invaded. It is a barbarous and inhumane thing to do so, altogether repugnant to the Christian Doctrine, and only to be practised by Heathenish Tyrants, and perverse Infidels, who are therefore liable to the severe and grievous punishments of a terrible Judgment.

Now seeing it is the command of God that the Ministers and Officers of Kings and Princes, should be chosen from among the  
best

best and fittest of the People, who are far from Covetousness and Ambition. It would be a bad custom amongst Christians, to appoint those for the administration of Ecclesiastical or Civil employments, who endeavour to screw themselves into Place by Bribes or Largesses, Arrogance or Ostentation, or other such arts and politick slights; and it would be worst of all, if unworthy and unfit Persons, vicious, covetous and ambitious Men, should be advanced to Magistracy, either by the sole favour of Princes, without any consideration of merit, or for a reward of other ignoble services, or upon the account of Money, solicitation of friends, recommendation of Ladies, or other worldly by-respects. But if  
Princes

Princes and Magistrates being endowed with the three above-mentioned Heads of Christian Piety, will carefully and diligently set about the performance of the duties of their several places and employments, they will omit no occasion of executing Justice and Judgment with all integrity, and they will give no place, either in City or Country, in publick or in private, to the saucy, disobedient, licentious, forward and corrupt humors of wicked and perverse Men: The fruit whereof will be, that delights and pleasures, luxury and uncleanness, pride and violence, brutishness and sensuality, and, in a word, the contempt and neglect of the Laws of God, reigning and abounding no more in Christian Countreys, Cities and Towns,

Towns; they will not be like unto those Cities, which St. Paul saies, were for unrighteousness delivered up to a Reprobate sense; or be by God, Judged worse than *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, nor be liable to that character, which the Prophet put upon those who neglected Righteousness and Judgment. *Jer. 9. They be all Adulterous, an Assembly of treacherous Men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the Truth upon the Earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord. Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother, for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will*  
*not*

not speak the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

Jer. 6. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness; and from the Prophet, even unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsely.

All these things happen where the fear of the Lord, true Piety and Justice are neglected by Princes and Magistrates: which is the cause that Thefts, Robberies, Murders, Adulteries, whoredom, Blasphemy, Perjury, Usury, Disobedience to Parents, Irreverence towards Superiours; in a word, the forgetting and contempt of the commandments of God, and all other horrid vices and impieties, are so frequent, and that besides the eternal destruction to which they hurry Men headlong, they

they make Christ, and the most pure and holy Christian Religion, not only to be despised and contemned, but also reproached and evil spoken of by barbarous and unbelieving Nations, and perfidious Jews; when they see and observe Christian Countrys and Cities full of Murderers, Usurers, Deceivers, Cheats, Backbiters, Robbers, Thieves, Bauds, Whores, Adulterers, and other flagitious Sinners; abounding in Hatred, Envy, Suspensions, Injuries and Offences; void of Peace, Sincerity and Honesty: and lastly, practising Carnal Licentiousness, and all the tricks and artifices of Fraud and Cunning. All which vices and wickednesses are banished from thence, where the decency of an honest Christian Conversation, and the Obedience

ence and love of Gods Commands are encouraged by Princes and Magistrates, where Injuries, Villanies, Revenge and Contentions, are not reckoned Honourable, but Disgraceful to Persons and Families; where Virtue only is applauded; but Cruelty and Injustice, Immodesty, Inhumanity, Pride and Arrogance are discountenanced and hissed at. Now it is impossible that in those places where Rulers and Governors do their duty, and give good example to others, Murderers, Thieves, Robbers, Blasphemers, Adulterers, perjured Persons, Panders, Usurers, Cheats, Covetous and hurtful persons, Witches, Wizzards, Sorcerers, or any despisers and transgressors of the Laws of Heaven should harbour and abide, but that all,  
accor-

according to the direction of God, should, as much as may be, be entirely rooted out, not only lest by their crimes and wickedness they may hurt others, but lest they should by their filthy Conversation corrupting the whole Body of the State, and especially the tender Youth, allure them into the like Crimes, and render their Scholars worse than the Masters: because we are all apt to learn and imitate wicked and bad examples; for as the divine Oracle saith, *Gen. 8. The imagination of Mans heart is evil from his Youth.*

Nor would any reason of State allow, if the fear of the Lord, Repentance and Brotherly-love, dwelt as they ought, in the hearts of Princes, that open Malefactors, disturbers of the publick Peace,  
and



and those that hurt and corrupt the Innocent and Simple, who by the Authority of divine Law are utterly to be expelled and cast out of Christian Governments, should either be suffered to live in their own Country, or be received, protected and defended by other Princes; or secured by Pass-ports and safe conducts; lest thereby they might be continued alive to the ruine and destruction, either of the Princes and Magistrates from whom they have fled, or of those by whom they are received. If this were punctually observed, we should find greater reverence paid to the Law, less licentiousness and wanton and rash Factionousness amongst Christians.

For neither is divine Justice divided; nor is any wicked, impure,

pure or incorrigible person, tho transported to any place of the Earth, approved of, or accepted of God, nor ought good and godly Princes ever to admit such to any place in their favour or affairs. for it is written: *Psal. 5.* For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful Man. Now that this Judgment and Counsel of God ought to be followed by those Princes, who study and endeavour to approve themselves to the Lord and Prince of Princes, that holy profession of the Prince according to Gods own heart, plainly demonstrates. *Psal. 101.* I will

will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside, it shall not cleave to me. A forward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath a high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit, shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies, shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the Land: that I may cut off all wicked doers from the City of the Lord. The authority of divine Justice is perpetual and unalterable; which ought equally

ly to be regarded by all Christian Princes, nor must they think it is divided, or to be executed by halves, but they must observe it wholly and entirely, squaring it by the Will and Precept of the King of Kings, and Lord of all the Earth: who when he had appointed Cities of Refuge or Sanctuaries amongst his People, whether they who had killed any one without malice or inveterate and confirmed hatred, might fly to escape revenge; concerning others who with a deliberate purpose of mind committed the fact, he thus Enacts. *Dent. 19. If any Man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he dies, and fleeth into one of these Cities: then the Elders of his City shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver*

and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die: thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee. The same Justice he commands to be executed *Dent. 17. 19, 22, 24.* against Thieves, Robbers, Cheats, Ravishers, Adulterers, and other open Offenders, and publick violators of Justice, Truth and Honesty, all whom he will have taken out of the way, that the evil may be put away from Israel; and therefore to the several sentences he adds: *And so shalt thou put away the evil from among you.*

And since the Christian Doctrine hath taught the rest of the Officers of Kingdoms and Com-

monwealths, all Judges, Lawyers, Advocates, Proctors, Clerks, and other subservient Ministers of Magistrates and Courts of Judicature, the fear of the Lord, Repentance, and Brotherly-love; it will not allow them to Practise or get Estates by Fraud, Deceit, Cavilling, , Petty-fogging, malicious interpretation of the Law, protracting of Suits, starting of litigious Processes, superfluous invention of Pleas, or by false information against the Innocent, or unjust defence of the Guilty. For this Doctrine condemns all haughtiness of mind, Luxury, Pride, and Ambition, and all vices that are fed and cherished by riches even innocently got; but much more severely condemns Men who get Estates and live splendidly of the sweat and blood

blood of their Christian Brethren, and by their Fraud, Craft, cunning and over-reaching, and such ways as exceed; the perverseness of which God sadly complaining, thus threatens by the Prophet, Jer. 5. *Among my People are found wicked Men: they lay wait as he that setteth snares, they set a trap, they catch Men. As a Cage is full of Birds, so are their Houses full of Deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they over-pass the deeds of the wicked: they Judge not the Cause, the Cause of the Fatherless, yet they prosper: and the right of the needy do they not Judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: Shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? from such crimes must all the Officers*

244 *The Practical Rule* Part II.  
of a State flee, who in prospect of  
Salvation, endeavour to live  
Godly, Justly, and Honestly in  
this present wicked world; and  
they ought to make it their whole  
care and business, that Equity,  
Justice and Moderation may flour-  
ish, both in publick and private;  
and that the powerful, rich and  
crafty, may not unjustly impose  
upon the weak, poor and simple,  
since that charge is seriously pres-  
sed upon them by God himself.  
*Isa. i. Learn to do well, seek Judg-  
ment, relieve the oppressed, Judge  
the fatherless, plead for the wi-  
dow.*

*The Duty of the  
Rich.*

Now as to the  
Rich, and such as  
endeavour to be so;  
if they would remember their  
promise made in holy Baptism,  
and confirmed by covenant with  
the



the Lord, if they resolve to follow after, and practise holiness according to the rules of Christian Piety, they may easily and plainly learn from the Doctrine of our Lord and Master, contained in the three aforementioned Heads, how far otherwise they ought to behave themselves, both in getting and spending of Estates, than most part of Rich Men usually do. For the Unjust, Covetous and Insatiable Desire of Riches, and the vain, superfluous, ambitious, or selfish use of them, are not consistent with the fear of the Lord, the duty of Repentance, and Brotherly-love of Christians, which approve not those advantages that wealth abuses to pleasures and luxury; but rather condemn them; The Christian Doctrine that advises

those who would be saved, not to trust to Riches, commending Honesty, Modesty, Temperance, Innocence, Continnence, Mercy, Bounty, Liberality, and the other Duties of Piety and Religion; and on the contrary detesting and disswading from the opposite vices, as Pride and Haughtiness, Delights and Pleasures, Injuries, Robberies and Oppression of the Poor, detaining or Cheating the Labourers Wages, Usury, Monopolies, enhaunsing of prices, and every thing else, that is either disgraceful to the doer, hurtful to our Christian Brethren, or inconsistent with the publick good, in the Judgment of God himself. For he who reckons all Christians his Brethren, and Children of one Common Father, the Just, Merciful,

Merciful and Bountiful God, and shall know that they stand in need of his help, ought to assist them partly by giving, and partly by lending without any hope of profit, benefit or interest; and thereby magnifie God the Father, who hath enabled him to shew that kindness to his Brethren, which the liberal goodness of God hath promised to recompense with a sure and excellent reward. For so it is written, *Luke 6. Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest: for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore Merciful, as your Father also is Merciful.* To this duty of beneficence enjoyned by Christ to his Disciples, we may add that

strict command of God. Dent. 15.  
If there be among you a poor Man  
of one of thy brethren, within any  
of thy Gates, in thy Land which  
the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou  
shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut  
thine hand from thy poor brother:  
But thou shalt open thine hand  
wide unto him, and shalt surely  
lend him sufficient for his need,  
in that which he wanteth. Beware  
that there be not a thought in thy  
wicked heart, saying, the seventh  
year, the year of release is at hand:  
and thine eye be evil against thy  
poor brother, and thou givest him  
nought, and he cry unto the Lord  
against thee, and it be sin unto thee.  
Thou shalt surely give him, and  
thine heart shall not be grieved when  
thou givest unto him: because that  
for that thing the Lord thy God  
shall bless thee in all thy works, and  
in

in all that thou puttest thine hand  
unto. For the poor shall never cease  
out of the Land: therefore I com-  
mand thee, saying, Thou shalt open  
thine hand wide unto thy brother,  
to thy poor, and to thy needy, in  
the Land. The sincere Disciples  
of Christ ought to set before their  
eyes, and think on that com-  
mand of God, that is backed  
with so many reasons, commend-  
ed by so many promises, and arm-  
ed with so many threatnings a-  
gainst the neglecters of it, and  
freely bestow and lend according  
to their abilities; avoiding what  
in them lies, that sentence pro-  
nounced by the Holy Ghost, a-  
gainst the rich Men of this World,  
and not in good works. Jam. 5.  
Go to now ye rich Men, weep and  
bowl for your miseries that shall  
come upon you. Your riches are cor-  
rupted,

rupted, and your Garments are Moth-eaten, your Gold and Silver is Cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold the hire of the Labourers, which have reaped dawn your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the Earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

Consonant to this sentence is that dreadful commination of Christ: Luke 6. Wo unto you that are rich: for ye have received your consolation. Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger: wo unto you that laugh  
now:

now: for ye shall mourn and weep. And is it not a very terrible sentence that is pronounced, and with an asseveration confirmed by our Saviour against rich Men? Mat. 19. *Verily I say unto you, that a rich Man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* The reason of this difficulty the Holy Ghost affirms to be, because the desire and love of riches deceives Men, and turns them often out of the straight road of Equity and Justice. For he that desires to be rich, hastens to be so: but then what respect is there to the Law? what fear or shame in him who sets his soul upon wealth? nay plenty and opulency when once it is acquired,

quired, debauches both Men and Women from an innocent, modest and honest way of living, into luxury, vanity and pomp, into pride and strife, and into other violations of the divine commandments, and contempt of Christian simplicity, setting off enormous vices with great and plausible names; so prone is the sinful appetite of Man to abuse even the advantages and blessings of earthly things; a fault carefully to be avoided, as the Apostle admonisheth: *1 Tim. 6. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown Men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through*



through with many sorrows. And therefore, that good Men may be ware of that deceitfulness of riches, *Psal. 62. The holy Ghost by the mouth of the Prophet, gives this admonition. If riches encrease, set not your heart upon them.*

Nor is the holy Doctrine of our Lord and Master more remiss or obscure in informing *The duty of Merchants and Tradesmen.* all those who live, and endeavour to get Estates by Traffick and Trades. For such are taught by the fear of the Lord, the study of Repentance, and Brotherly Love, to deceive no Man; not to adulterate or change; diminish or increase their goods and commodities, nor to neglect any thing that relates to them, which the nature of the goods require; not to change and raise their prices,

prices, nor to deal fraudulently in weights and measures: for the holy Scriptures assure us, that all such frauds and cheats argue a contempt of divine Justice, Christian simplicity and uprightness, and are extremely offensive to the supreme Judge of all Men.

*Prov. 11. A false balance is an abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight. And again, Prov. 20. Divers weights and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord. Nor is that custom of cheating and circumventing our brethren, by false prices and oaths, and a cunning wheadle of words, less abominable to God; as it is written. Amos 8. Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the Land to fail, saying, when will the new Moon be gone,*

gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the Ephah small, and the Shekel great, and falsifying the ballances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for Silver, and the needy for a pair of Shoes; yea and sell the refuse of the wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the Land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? whosoever are the true disciples and followers of Christ will fear and stand in awe to offend God, and to be liable to such threatnings: whatever art or profession they follow, they'll manage the same with all faithfulness and care, and behave themselves modestly and justly in the business they set about, neither  
wrong-

wronging their brethren in their work, nor exacting too much for their labour, nor overvaluing the goods they sell them; but proposing to themselves charity and the good of others, rather than covetousness, and abominating all filthy and sordid gain, they will be content with the lawful gettings of their callings, and shun and despise the pride of life, as a thing altogether inconsistent with the simplicity of their vocation.

But that we may now descend from the publick society and duties of Mankind, to the particular relations of private persons, and enter into the houses and families of Christians; we are to take notice, what the mutual duties of private persons in a family are; and how they are to be performed

formed by Christians, as in the presence of God, who is a Judge and witness of all their actions.

Christian Women and Wives who desire to order their lives according to this short but universal rule of Christian Piety, must studiously avoid all Pride, Arrogance, Vain-glorious Boasting, Envy, Haughtiness, Back-biting, and evil speaking; shewing nothing in their conversation, of Voluptuousness, Wantonness, Lustfulness, Idleness, or Curiosity, and giving no example of Anger, Hatred, Discord, Grudge nor Malice: Put on the contrary, they are in all things to approve themselves Modest, Peaceable, lovers of Truth, Charity and Simplicity, and Dutiful and Obedient to their Husbands and Yokefellows,  
in

*The duty of  
Women and  
Wives.*

in all things that are lawful and honest. For these ornaments and certain proofs of true virtue, are always conspicuous in those Christian Women, who fear the Lord, practise Repentance, and live holily in Brotherly-love and Charity with all Men: To which they are also enjoined by the holy Precepts of the spirit of God, with assurances of his favour if they perform, and of his anger and indignation, if they omit and neglect their duty. *Eph. 5. Wives submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord. For the Husband is the head of the Wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the Wives be to their own Husbands in every thing. Wives who sincerely*

ly and heartily study Piety, will not mind gorgeous attire, rich, costly and gaudy apparel, which by decking and setting off the body, Eclipses the beauty, gravity and modesty of the mind, but such as being prepared by virtue, is an argument of probity and chiefly designed to render them acceptable to God and beloved of their own Husbands. For that attire and dress is most commendable and graceful in a Wife, which adorns the mind, and makes her lovely in the sight of God, and her own Husband, and venerable to all others; that being the ornament which the Holy Ghost prescribes and commends, as becoming a Christian Wife.

1 Pet. 3. *While they (the Husbands) behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning*

dorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden Man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own Husbands. And tho God would not have such to be ignorant or negligent of their own duty; yet he does not approve that they should be tatlers, or disputers, or that they should arrogate to themselves wisdom and knowledge, nor would he have them to be greedy of many teachers, or desirous of much learning; but being satisfied with the knowledge



ledge of true Piety, and Christian Candor and Simplicity, that they should busie themselves in the exercise and practice thereof.

1 Cor. 14. *Let your Women keep silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted to them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law. And if they will learn any thing let them ask their Husbands at home: for it is a shame for Women to speak in the Church.* And again in another place. 1 Tim. 2. *Let the Women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a Woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the Man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve, And Adam was not deceived, but the Woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in Child-bearing.*

bearing, if they continue in Faith, and Charity, and Holiness with Sobriety.

The same Doctrine  
*The duty of* and Discipline of Christian Piety comprehend  
*Husbands.*

ed under the three aforementioned Heads, the fear of the Lord, Repentance, and Brotherly-love, if it be rightly known and practised, will also keep Men in their duty, and to the performance of the chaste Vows and Promises of Marriage; for it enjoyns Husbands to love their Wives, and to have the same care of them as of themselves, but especially, as the most important concern of Marriage, to consult and provide for the eternal salvation of the Wife, not only by frequent and reiterated admonitions, but also by good and wholsom examples, and, if it

it be needful, by undergoing all kinds of danger, and running the risk of life and fortune for accomplishing that end. The whole of this duty is by the Holy Ghost sum'm'd up in this Precept. Eph. 5. *Husbands love your Wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it: that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinckle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought Men to love their Wives, as their own bodies: he that loveth his Wife, loveth himself. For no Man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: for we are Members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,*

264 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

*bones. For this cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and shall be joyned unto his Wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular, so love his Wife, even as himself; and the Wife see that she reverence her Husband.*

*Domestick Discipline.*

Now those houses and families are most acceptable to God, which are reared upon the Foundations of the fear of the Lord, Repentance, and Brotherly love, where Children and Servants are both by institution and example instructed in the duties of Virtue and true Piety, and taught to discharge the several offices of their stations; to fear and reverence their Fathers and Masters, and

and to submit to the Authority of the Master of the Family, as appointed and established by the Laws of God. Wherefore it ought to be the care and study both of Masters of Families, and of Children and Servants, That all should diligently discharge their several parts, the one in commanding, the others in obeying, and all in mutual helping and assisting of one another, in promoting the good of the Family, the practice of Piety, and the salvation of their Souls. For so are Families enjoyed by the Holy Ghost, to know and practise their duties. *Ephes. 6. Children, obey your Parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy Father and thy Mother, (which is the first Commandment with Promise) that it may be well with thee,*

N

and

266 The Practical Rule Part II.

and thou mayest live long on the earth. And ye Fathers, provoke not your Children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Servants be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ: not with eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to Men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And ye Masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.

Nor

Nor is it consistent with Christian Doctrine and Truth, that Children who ought to be educated by their Parents in the fear of the Lord, and in the knowledge and practice of Piety, should be bred up in the Principles of corrupt and perverse Doctrine, and led in the broad way that tends to destruction, being from their infancy indulged and pampered in Pomp and Pride; countenanced in Luxury, Worldly Delights, and Lustful Pleasures; taught all the lewd Songs, Sports, and Exercises of the Age; and made acquainted with the factious Principles, Feuds and Animosities of their Parents, which from their Cradle upward they pursue and promote: seeing thereby it happens, that the Children of Christians who ought to

be holy and imitable examples to all the World, of Religion, Honesty, Reverence and Piety towards God, become the scandalous patterns of Dishonesty, Uncleanneſs, Irreverence and Impiety both againſt God and their Parents. Servants and Domesticks alſo encouraged by the publick and private examples of wickedneſs, both in ſocieties abroad and families at home, grow, through the neglect of thoſe who ſhould puniſh and correct them, proper instruments of Unfaithfulneſs, Diſobedience, Robberies, Thefts, Oppreſſions, and the diſgrace of Families; ſo that all thoſe employments almoſt which in themſelves are good and lawful, run out of courſe, and degenerate into corrupt Nuiſances. Now it is manifeſt that this perverſeneſs  
ed                      and



and depravation of manners  
always happens, when Christian  
People are not taught the pure,  
simple, true and severe Disci-  
pline of the Gospel: or if they  
be taught it, either through an  
inveterate habit of sinning, whol-  
ly slight and neglect it, or if they  
commend and approve it, yet  
think it not so absolutely necessa-  
ry, as that they ought to prefer  
it before all other things that  
come in competition therewith,  
and so receive the word that is  
sown by the Husband-man, in  
stony or thorny ground. But  
we ought greatly to fear and have  
a care that that complaint of the  
Lord may not seem to be uttered  
against us. *Jer. 5. A wonderful  
and horrible thing is committed in  
the Land. The Prophets prophesie  
falsely, and the Priests bear rule by*

270 *The Practical Rule* Part. II.

*their means, and my People love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?*

Now to conclude, what sinner soever moved by the fear of the Lord, shall seriously consider upon the wrath and indignation of God, that he hath deserved, and the severe and terrible Judgment to which he has made himself liable; and shall again meditate in his own thoughts that Grace, Mercy, and the blessing of Heaven is ready prepared for him, if he will but carefully and heartily endeavour to be cloathed with the Wedding Garment, that is, to follow the rule of Piety above described; unless he be more than impious, and given over to a reprobate sense; there is no doubt but that he will turn with full purpose of heart and soul,

soul, from Vice to Virtue, from corruption to integrity, from madness and folly, to a sound mind, and, in a word from the slavery of the Devil, to that merciful Lord, who is so pleased with the serious and true Repentance of Sinners, that with an Oath he has sworn he desires it, and has freely promised his blessings to those who hope in his Mercy, and turn to him with their heart. *As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* He that hath ears to hear let him hear, and turn to Repentance, if he desire to obtain mercy from the most High; who healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds: by whose grace, assistance, good will

will and pleasure, we have written this practical Rule of Christian Piety, for the instruction of our fellow-Christians; hoping that the meditation and study thereof may be useful to them for obtaining salvation, through the goodness of God; to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.

It hath not been our purpose to set off this Christian Institution, with the ornaments and flourishes of exquisite Language and Rhetorick; but rather in few and plain words to accommodate this Doctrine of Piety to the capacities of all Christians, who might thereby more easily both learn and retain it; it being our desire rather to deliver and teach useful and good sense, than gay and painted words. Now the

sum of all that hath been said, is shortly this. That extraordinary and supernatural gifts and graces are promised to all Men, who will believe and accept the same, not only in this life, but also more especially in that which is to come; and the same purchased and conveyed to them by the virtue and efficacy of that wonderful mystery of the conception, birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the Son of God; who is ready to bestow them on every one, who in the fear of the Lord obeys the holy dictates and precepts of the Law, and is diligent and sincere in the practice of Brotherly-love and Charity. For God requires that Men should fear, obey, worship and serve him, and upon these conditions gave us his promises; to the performance

formance of which he obliged himself out of meer grace and bounty. And this is the duty which every Christian, whether high or low, learned or unlearned, ought to know and practise.

But for all other things which Men may desire to know and learn, relating either to their private capacities, or to the rank and quality which they bear amongst Men, and wherein they may be deceived, mistaken and err; since all Men are not competent Judges of such things, we have purposely omitted them, exhorting all and every one, that having diligently considered and observed the abovementioned three heads, they would keep that station, wherein by right and Law they are placed; not declining to the right or to the left  
from

from their common duty, which being faithfully performed, God of his goodness, will impart to all, what is necessary to be known and practised by every one in the place and degree that he is called to in society. Now if any thing appear unseemly and not altogether so justifiable in the actions and conduct of others; it is not the part of any private Man to Judg and Censure it, or to endeavour any change or alteration in the Duties and Offices of others; but to leave the care of that to the lawful Ministers, and Magistrates, and to pray the Lord of the Vineyard, that he would send fit Labourers into his Vineyard, and that he would advance, protect and defend his own Harvest. Without doubt, the Lord will have pity on his inheritance,  
and

244 *The Practical Rule* Part II.

and take care of the welfare and prosperity of his people; and will highly approve, that no Man for the fault or error of another, withdraw himself from the unity and concord of the established Church and Government; but that every Man mind, not what other people do, but what he ought to do and perform himself, and with heart and soul set about it.



**FINIS**